What We Have Learned

Principles of
Truth and Reconciliation.

Truth and
Reconciliation
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What We Have Learned:
Principles of Truth and Reconciliation

The Truth and Reconciliation
Commission of Canada

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Contents

What we have learned: Principles of truth and reconciliation 1

Introduction 5

The history 9

The legacy 103

Reconciliation 113

Bibliography 127

Endnotes 145

What we have learned: Principles of truth and reconciliation

It is due to the courage and determination of former students—the Survivors of Canada's residential school system—that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was established. They worked for decades to place the issue of the abusive treatment that students were subjected to at residential schools on the national agenda. Their perseverance led to the reaching of the historic Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement.

All Canadians must now demonstrate the same level of courage and determination, as we commit to an ongoing process of reconciliation. By establishing a new and respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians, we will restore what must be restored, repair what must be repaired, and return what must be returned.

In preparation for the release of its final report, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada has developed a definition of *reconciliation* and a guiding set of principles for truth and reconciliation. This definition has informed the Commission's work and the principles have shaped the calls to action we will issue in the final report.

M Sinclair

Justice Murray Sinclair
CHAIR, TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION OF CANADA

W. Littlechild IPC

Chief Wilton Littlechild
COMMISSIONER

Marie Wilson

Dr. Marie Wilson
COMMISSIONER

Principles of Reconciliation

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada believes that in order for Canada to flourish in the twenty-first century, reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canada must be based on the following principles.

1

The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* is the framework for reconciliation at all levels and across all sectors of Canadian society.

2

First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, as the original peoples of this country and as self-determining peoples, have Treaty, constitutional, and human rights that must be recognized and respected.

3

Reconciliation is a process of healing of relationships that requires public truth sharing, apology, and commemoration that acknowledge and redress past harms.

4

Reconciliation requires constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacies of colonialism that have had destructive impacts on Aboriginal peoples' education, cultures and languages, health, child welfare, the administration of justice, and economic opportunities and prosperity.

5

Reconciliation must create a more equitable and inclusive society by closing the gaps in social, health, and economic outcomes that exist between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

6

All Canadians, as Treaty peoples, share responsibility for establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships.

7

The perspectives and understandings of Aboriginal Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers of the ethics, concepts, and practices of reconciliation are vital to long-term reconciliation.

8

Supporting Aboriginal peoples' cultural revitalization and integrating Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, laws, protocols, and connections to the land into the reconciliation process are essential.

9

Reconciliation requires political will, joint leadership, trust building, accountability, and transparency, as well as a substantial investment of resources.

10

Reconciliation requires sustained public education and dialogue, including youth engagement, about the history and legacy of residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal rights, as well as the historical and contemporary contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canadian society.

The following pages outline the Commission's central conclusions about the history and legacy of residential schools and identify both the barriers to reconciliation and the opportunities for constructive action that currently exist.

Introduction

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principal of the Gordon's Reserve school in Saskatchewan, Albert Southard, wrote that he believed that the goal of residential schooling was to "change the philosophy of the Indian child. In other words since they must work and live with 'whites' then they must begin to think as 'whites.'"[19] Southard said that the Gordon's school could never have a student council, since "in so far as the Indian understands the department's policy, he is against it."[20] In a 1958 article on residential schools, senior Oblate André Renaud echoed the words of John A. Macdonald, arguing that when students at day schools went back to their "homes at the end of the school day and for the weekend, the pupils are re-exposed to their native culture, however diluted, from which the school is trying to separate them." A residential school, on the other hand, could "surround its pupils almost twenty-four hours a day with non-Indian Canadian culture through radio, television, public address system, movies, books, newspapers, group activities, etc."[21]

Despite the coercive measures that the government adopted, it failed to achieve its policy goals. Although Aboriginal peoples and cultures have been badly damaged, they continue to exist. Aboriginal people have refused to surrender their identity. It was the former students, the Survivors of Canada's residential schools, who placed the residential school issue on the public agenda. Their efforts led to the negotiation of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement that mandated the establishment of a residential school Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. In response to their efforts, the federal government and the churches also issued public apologies for their involvement in the operation of the residential school system.

The history

A group of students and parents from the Saddle Lake Reserve, en route to the Methodist-operated school in Red Deer, Alberta. Woodruff, Library and Archives Canada, PA-[illegible]

It can start with a knock on the door one morning. It is the local Indian agent, or the parish priest, or, perhaps, a Mounted Police officer. The bus for residential school leaves that morning. It is a day the parents have long been dreading. Even if the children have been warned in advance, the morning's events are still a shock. The officials have arrived and the children must go.

For tens of thousands of Aboriginal children for over a century, this was the beginning of their residential schooling. They were torn from their parents, who often surrendered them only under threat of prosecution. Then, they were hurled into a strange and frightening place, one in which their parents and culture would be demeaned and oppressed.

For Frederick Ernest Koe, it started when the Anglican minister and the Mounted Police arrived with a message that he had to leave his parents' home in Aklavik in the Northwest Territories that morning. "And I didn't get to say goodbye to my dad or my brother Allan, didn't get to pet my dogs or nothing."[1]

The day she left for the Lestock, Saskatchewan, school, Marlene Kayseas's parents drove her into the town of Wadena. "There was a big truck there. It had a back door and that truck was full of kids and there was no windows on that truck."[2] Larry Beardy travelled by train from Churchill, Manitoba, to the Anglican residential school in Dauphin, Manitoba—a journey of 1,200 kilometres. As soon as they realized that they were leaving their parents behind, the younger children started crying. At every stop, the train took on more children and they would start to cry as well. "That train I want to call that train of tears."[3] Florence Horassi was taken to the Fort Providence, Northwest Territories, school in a small airplane. On its way to the school, the plane stopped at a number of small communities to pick up students. "When the plane took off, there's about six or five older ones, didn't cry, but I saw tears come right out of their eyes. Everybody else was crying. There's a whole plane crying. I wanted to cry, too, 'cause my brother was crying, but I held my tears back and held him."[4]

The arrival at school was often even more traumatizing than the departure from home or the journey. Lily Bruce's parents were in tears when they left her and her brother at the Alert Bay, British Columbia, school.[5] At Fort Chipewyan in northern Alberta, Vitaline Elsie Jenner fought to stay with her mother. "I was screaming and hollering. And in my language I said, 'Mama, Mama, *kâya nakasin*' and in English it was, 'Mom, Mom, don't leave me.' 'Cause that's all I knew was to speak Cree. And so the nun took us."[6]

Nellie Ningewance was raised in Hudson, Ontario, and went to the Sioux Lookout, Ontario, school in the 1950s and 1960s. "When we arrived we had to register that we had arrived, then they took us to cut our hair."[7] Bernice Jacks became very frightened when her hair was cut on her arrival at a school in the Northwest Territories. "I could see my hair falling. And I couldn't do nothing. And I was so afraid my mom … I wasn't thinking about myself. I was thinking about Mom. I say, 'Mom's gonna be really mad. And June is gonna be angry. And it's gonna be my fault.'"[8]

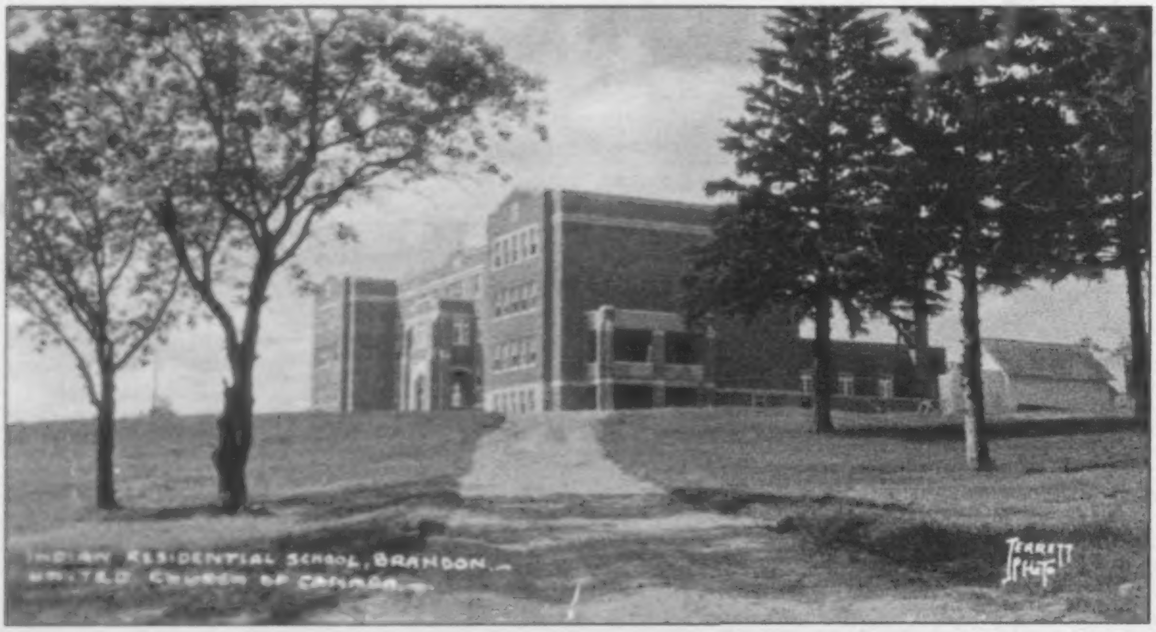
Marthe Basile-Coocoo recalled feeling a chill on first seeing the Pointe Bleue, Québec, school.

> It was something like a grey day, it was a day without sunshine. It was, it was the impression that I had, that I was only six years old, then, well, the nuns separated us, my brothers, and then my uncles, then I no longer understood. Then that, that was a period there, of suffering, nights of crying, we all gathered in a corner, meaning that we came together, and there we cried. Our nights were like that.[9]

Pauline St-Onge was traumatized by just the sight of the Sept-Îles school in Québec. She fought back when her father tried to take her into the school. "I thought in my child's head I said: 'you would … you would make me go there, but I will learn nothing, nothing, nothing.'"[10]

Campbell Papequash was taken, against his will, to residential school in 1946. "And after I was taken there they took off my clothes and then they deloused me. I didn't know what was happening but I learned about it later, that they were delousing me; 'the dirty, no-good-for-nothing savages, lousy.'"[11]

Roy Denny was perplexed and frightened by the clothing that the priests and sisters wore at the Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia, school. "We were greeted by this man dressed in black with a long gown. That was the priest, come to find later. And the nuns with their black, black outfits with the white collar and a white, white collar and, like a breastplate of white."[12] Calvin Myerion recalled being overwhelmed by the size of the Brandon, Manitoba,



"The only building that I knew up to that time, that moment in my life was the one-storey house that we had. And when I got to the residential school, I seen this big monster of a building, and I've never seen any buildings that, that large, that high." – Calvin Myerion, Brandon, Manitoba, school. United Church of Canada Board of Home Missions, 86.158P/ 22N.

school. "The only building that I knew up to that time, that moment in my life was the one-storey house that we had. And when I got to the residential school, I seen this big monster of a building, and I've never seen any buildings that, that large, that high."[13] Archie Hyacinthe compared the experience to that of being captured and taken into captivity. "That's when the trauma started for me, being separated from my sister, from my parents, and from our, our home. We were no longer free. It was like being, you know, taken to a strange land, even though it was our, our, our land, as I understood later on."[14] When she first went to the Amos, Québec, school, Margo Wylde could not speak any French. "I said to myself, 'How am I going to express myself? How will I make people understand what I'm saying?' And I wanted to find my sisters to ask them to come and get me. You know it's sad to say, but I felt I was a captive."[15]

On their arrival at residential school, students often were required to exchange the clothes they were wearing for school-supplied clothing. This could mean the loss of home-made clothing that was of particular value and meaning to them. Murray Crowe said his clothes from home were taken and burned at the school that he attended in northwestern Ontario.[16] When Wilbur Abrahams's mother sent him to the Alert Bay school in British Columbia, she outfitted him in brand-new clothes. When he arrived at the school, he was told to hand in this outfit in exchange for school clothing. "That was the last time I saw my new clothes. Dare not ask questions."[17] Martin Nicholas of Nelson House, Manitoba,

Boys at the Sioux Lookout, Ontario, school in the 1930s in their school uniforms. General Synod Archives; Anglican Church of Canada; P75-103-S7-127.

went to the Pine Creek, Manitoba, school in the 1950s. "My mom had prepared me in Native clothing. She had made me a buckskin jacket, beaded with fringes.... And my mom did beautiful work, and I was really proud of my clothes. And when I got to residential school, that first day I remember, they stripped us of our clothes."[18] On her arrival at the Presbyterian school in Kenora, Ontario, Lorna Morgan was wearing "these nice little beaded moccasins that my grandma had made me to wear for school, and I was very proud of them." She said they were taken from her and thrown in the garbage.[19]

Gilles Petiquay, who attended the Pointe Bleue school, was shocked by the fact that each student was assigned a number. "I remember that the first number that I had at the residential school was 95. I had that number—95—for a year. The second number was number 4. I had it for a longer period of time. The third number was 56. I also kept it for a long time. We walked with the numbers on us."[20]

Older brothers were separated from younger brothers, older sisters were separated from younger sisters, and brothers and sisters were separated from each other. Wilbur Abrahams climbed up the steps to the Alert Bay school behind his sisters and started following them to the girls' side of the school. Then, he felt a staff member pulling him by the ear, telling him to turn the other way. "I have always believed that, I think at that particular moment, my spirit left."[21]

When Peter Ross was enrolled at the Immaculate Conception school in Aklavik, Northwest Territories, it was the first time he had ever been parted from his sisters. He said that in all the time he was at the school, he was able to speak with them only at Christmas and on Catholic feast days.[22] Daniel Nanooch recalled that he talked with his sister only four times a year at the Wabasca, Alberta, school. "They had a fence in the playground. Nobody was allowed near the fence. The boys played on this side, the girls played on the other side. Nobody was allowed to go to that fence there and talk to the girls through the fence or whatever, you can't."[23]

The only reason Bernice Jacks had wanted to go to residential school was to be with her older sister. But once she was there, she discovered they were to sleep in separate dormitories. On the occasions when she slipped into the older girls' dormitory and crawled into her sister's bed, her sister scolded her and sent her away: "My sister never talked to me like that before."[24] Helen Kakekayash's older sister tried to comfort her when she first arrived at the McIntosh, Ontario, school. She recalled that "she would try to talk to me, and she would get spanked."[25] Bernard Catcheway said that even though he and his sister were both attending the Pine Creek school, they could not communicate with each other. "I couldn't talk to her, I couldn't wave at her. If you did you'd get, you know a push in the head by a nun."[26] On her second day at the Kamloops school in British Columbia, Julianna Alexander went to speak to her brother. "Did I ever get a good pounding and licking, get over there, you can't go over there, you can't talk to him, you know. I said, 'Yeah, but he's my brother.'"[27]

The strict segregation of the sexes at the schools meant that brothers and sisters were quickly separated from one another. General Synod Archives, Anglican Church of Canada, P7538-635.

Taken from their homes, stripped of their belongings, and separated from their siblings, residential school children lived in a world dominated by fear, loneliness, and lack of affection.

William Herney, who attended the Shubenacadie school in Nova Scotia, recalled the first few days in the school as being frightening and bewildering. "Within those few days, you had to learn, because otherwise you're gonna get your head knocked off. Anyway, you learned everything. You learned to obey. And one of the rules that you didn't break, you obey, and you were scared, you were very scared."[28] Raymond Cutknife recalled that when he attended the Hobbema school in Alberta, he "lived with fear."[29] Of his years in two different Manitoba schools, Timothy Henderson said, "Every day was, you were in constant fear that, your hope was that it wasn't you today that we're going to, that was going to be the target, the victim. You know, you weren't going to have to suffer any form of humiliation."[30] Shirley Waskewitch said that in Kindergarten at the Catholic school in Onion Lake, Saskatchewan, "I learned the fear, how to be so fearful at six years old. It was instilled in me."[31]

At the Fort Alexander, Manitoba, school, Patrick Bruyere used to cry himself to sleep. "There was, you know, a few nights I remember that I just, you know, cried myself to sleep, I guess, because of, you know, wanting to see my mom and dad."[32] Ernest Barkman, who attended the Pine Creek school, recalled, "I was really lonely and I cried a lot, my brother who was with me said I cried a lot."[33] Paul Dixon, who attended schools in Québec and Ontario, said that at night, children tried to weep silently. "If one child was caught crying, eh, oh, everybody was in trouble."[34] Betsy Annahatak grew up in Kangirsuk, in northern Québec, which was then known as Payne Bay. When her parents were on the land, she lived in a small hostel in the community. "When one person would start crying, all the, all the little girls would start crying; all of us. We were different ages. And we would cry like little puppies or dogs, right into the night, until we go to sleep; longing for our families."[35]

Students' hearts were hardened. Rick Gilbert remembered the Williams Lake, British Columbia, school as a loveless place. "That was one thing about this school was that when you got hurt or got beat up or something, and you started crying, nobody comforted you. You just sat in the corner and cried and cried till you got tired of crying then you got up and carried on with life."[36] Nick Sibbeston, who was placed in the Fort Providence school in the Northwest Territories at the age of five, recalled it as a place where children hid their emotions. "In residential school you quickly learn that you should not cry. If you cry you're teased, you're shamed out, you're even punished."[37] One former student said that during her time at the Sturgeon Landing school in Saskatchewan, she could not recall a staff member ever smiling at a child.[38] Jack Anawak recalled of his time at Chesterfield Inlet, in what is now Nunavut, in the 1950s that "there was no love, there was no feelings, it was just supervisory."[39] Lydia Ross, who attended the Cross Lake school in Manitoba, said, "If you cried, if you got hurt and cried, there was no, nobody to, nobody to comfort, comfort you, nobody to put their arms."[40] Stephen Kakfwi, who attended Grollier Hall in Inuvik and Grandin College in Fort Smith, Northwest Territories, said this lack of compassion affected the way students treated one another. "No hugs, nothing, no comfort. Everything that, I think, happened in the residential schools, we picked it up: we didn't get any hugs; you ain't going to get one out of me I'll tell you that."[41] Victoria McIntosh said that life at the Fort Alexander, Manitoba, school taught her not to trust anyone. "You learn not to cry anymore. You just get harder. And yeah, you learn to shut down."[42]

These accounts all come from statements made by former residential school students to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. These events all took place in Canada within the realm of living memory. Like previous generations of residential school children, these children were sent to what were, in most cases, badly constructed, poorly maintained, overcrowded, unsanitary fire traps. Many children were fed a substandard diet and given a substandard education, and worked too hard. For far too long, they died in tragically high numbers. Discipline was harsh and unregulated; abuse was rife and unreported. It was, at best, institutionalized child neglect.

The people who built, funded, and operated the schools offered varying justifications for this destructive intrusion into the lives of Aboriginal families. Through it, they wished to turn the children into farmers and farmers' wives. They wanted the children to abandon their Aboriginal identity and come to know the Christian god. They feared that if the children were not educated, they would be a menace to the social order of the country. Canadian politicians wished to find a cheap way out of their long-term commitments to Aboriginal people. Christian churches sought government support for their missionary efforts. The schools were part of the colonization and conversion of Aboriginal people, and were intended to bring civilization and salvation to their children. These were the rationales that were used to justify making the lives of so many children so unhappy.

The imperial context

> The whole part of the residential school was a part of a bigger scheme of colonization. There was intent; the schools were there with the intent to change people, to make them like others and to make them not fit.
>
> And today, you know, we have to learn to decolonize.
>
> — Shirley Flowers, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada[illegible]

The mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada requires it to report on "the history, purpose, operation and supervision" of Canada's residential schools. These schools were part of a process that brought European states and Christian churches together in a complex and powerful manner. The history of the schools can be best understood in the context of this relationship between the growth of global, European-based empires and the Christian churches. Starting in the sixteenth century, European states gained control of Indigenous peoples' lands throughout the world. It was an era of mass migration. Millions of Europeans arrived as colonial settlers in nearly every part of the world. Millions of Africans were transported in the European-led slave trade, in which coastal Africans collaborated. Traders from India and China spread throughout the Red Sea and Indian Ocean, bringing with them indentured servants whose lives were little different from those of slaves.[illegible] The activities of explorers, farmers, prospectors, trading companies, or missionaries often set the stage for expansionary wars, the negotiation and the breaking of Treaties, attempts at cultural assimilation, and the exploitation and marginalization of the original inhabitants of the colonized lands.[illegible] Over time, Indigenous

By the end of the nineteenth century, the British Empire spanned the globe. This map was intended to convince Britons of the benefits of empire. In it, Canada was primarily valued for its farmland and as a captive market for British goods. Library and Archives Canada, [illegible]

children in places as distant from one another as East Africa, Australia, and Siberia would be separated from their parents and sent to residential schools.[16]

The spread of European-based empires was set in motion in the fifteenth century when the voyages of maritime explorers revealed potential sources of new wealth to the monarchs of Europe. The Spanish conquest of the Aztecs and the Incas gave Spain, and ultimately all of Europe, access to the resources of North and South America. This not only enriched the Old World, but it also unleashed an unceasing wave of migration, trade, conquest, and colonization.[17] It marked the beginning of the creation of a European-dominated global economy. Although it was led initially by Spain and Portugal, this era of imperial expansion came to be directed by Holland, France, and, in the end, most stunningly by Britain.[18]

Empires were established militarily. They engaged in extensive and violent wars with one another, maintained a military presence on their frontiers, and conducted innumerable military campaigns to put down nationalist uprisings.[19] Colonies were established to
]

be exploited economically. The benefits of empire could come directly as taxes, as precious metals, or as raw materials for industries in the homeland. Colonies often were required to purchase their imports solely from the homeland, making them a captive market.[illegible]

The mere presence of Indigenous people in these newly colonized lands blocked settler access to the land.[illegible] To gain control of the land of Indigenous people, colonists negotiated treaties, waged wars of extinction, eliminated traditional landholding practices, disrupted families, and imposed a political and spiritual order that came complete with new values and cultural practices.[illegible] Treaty promises often went unfulfilled. United States General William Tecumseh Sherman is quoted as having said, "We have made more than one thousand treaties with the various Indian tribes, and have not kept one of them." In commenting on Sherman's statement in 1880, C. C. Painter, a critic of American Indian policy, observed that the United States had

> never intended to keep them. They were not made to be kept, but to serve a present purpose, to settle a present difficulty in the easiest manner possible, to acquire a desired good with the least possible compensation, and then to be disregarded as soon as this purpose was tained and we were strong enough to enforce a new and more profitable arrangement.[illegible]

The outcome was usually disastrous for Indigenous people, while the chief beneficiaries of empire were the colonists and their descendants. Many of the colonies they settled grew to be among the most prosperous societies in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century world.[illegible] Settler colonies often went on to gain political independence. In the case of Canada and the United States of America, these newly created nations spread across North America. As they expanded, they continued to incorporate Indigenous peoples and their lands into empires. Colonialism remains an ongoing process, shaping both the structure and the quality of the relationship between the settlers and Indigenous peoples.

At their height, the European empires laid claim to most of the earth's surface and controlled the seas.[illegible] Numerous arguments were advanced to justify such extravagant interventions into the lands and lives of other peoples. These were largely elaborations on two basic concepts: 1) the Christian god had given the Christian nations the right to colonize the lands they 'discovered' as long as they converted the Indigenous populations; and 2) the Europeans were bringing the benefits of civilization (a concept that was intertwined with Christianity) to the 'heathen.' In short, it was contended that people were being colonized for their own benefit, either in this world or the next.

In the fifteenth century, the Roman Catholic Church, building on the traditions of the Roman Empire, conceived of itself as the guardian of a universal world order.[illegible] The adoption of Christianity within the Roman Empire (which defined itself as 'civilized') reinforced the view that to be civilized was to be Christian. The Catholic papacy was already playing a role in directing and legitimizing colonialism prior to Christopher Columbus's voyages to the Americas in the 1400s, largely by granting Catholic kingdoms the right to colonize lands they "discovered." In 1493, Pope Alexander VI issued the first of four orders, referred to as "papal bulls" (a term that takes its name from the lead seal that was used to seal the documents), that granted most of North and South America to Spain, the kingdom that had sponsored Columbus's voyage of the preceding year. These orders helped shape the political and legal arguments that have come to be referred to as the "Doctrine of Discovery," which was used to justify the colonization of the Americas in the sixteenth century. In return, the Spanish were expected to convert the Indigenous peoples of the Americas to Christianity.

Other European rulers rejected the Pope's ability to give away sovereignty over half the world, but they did not necessarily reject the Doctrine of Discovery—they simply modified it. The English argued that a claim to "discovered" lands was valid if the "discoverer" was able to take possession of them. Harman Verelst, who promoted the colonization in the eighteenth century of what is now the southern coast of the United States, wrote that "this Right arising from the first discovery is the first and fundamental Right of all European Nations, as to their Claim of Lands in America." This Doctrine of Discovery was linked to a second idea: the lands being claimed were *terra nullius*—no one's land—and therefore open to claim. On the basis of this concept, the British government claimed ownership of the entire Australian continent. (There, the doctrine of *terra nullius* remained the law until it was successfully challenged in court in 1992.) Under this doctrine, imperialists could argue that the presence of Indigenous people did not block a claim of *terra nullius*, since the Indigenous people simply occupied, rather than owned, the land. True ownership, they claimed, could come only with European-style agriculture.

Underlying these arguments was the belief that the colonizers were bringing civilization to savage people who could never civilize themselves. The "civilizing mission" rested on a belief of racial and cultural superiority. European writers and politicians often arranged racial groups in a hierarchy, each with their own set of mental and physical capabilities. The "special gifts" of the Europeans meant it was inevitable that they would conquer the lesser peoples. Beneath the Europeans, in descending order, were Asians, Africans, and the Indigenous peoples of the Americas and Australia. Some people held that Europeans had reached the pinnacle of civilization through a long and arduous process. In this view, the other peoples of the world had been held back by such factors as climate, geography, and migration. Through a civilizing process, Europeans could, however, raise the peoples of the world up to their level. This view was replaced in the nineteenth century by a racism that chose to cloak itself in the language of science, and held that the peoples of the world had differing abilities. Some argued that, for genetic reasons, there were limits to the ability of the less developed peoples to improve. In some cases, it was thought, contact with superior races could lead to only one outcome: the extinction of the inferior peoples.

These ideas shaped global policies towards Indigenous peoples. In 1883, Britain's Lord Rosebery, a future British prime minister, told an Australian audience, "It is on the British

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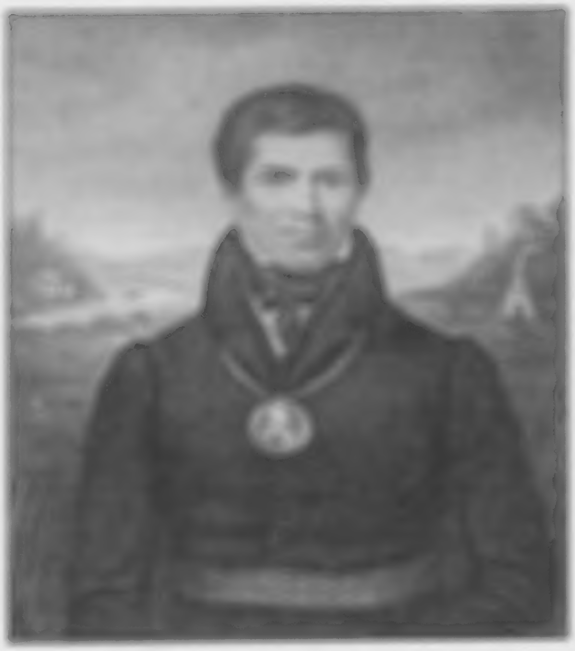


Kahkewaquonaby (Sacred Feathers), also known as Peter Jones, in 1832. He was an Ojibway chief who worked with Methodist officials to establish the Mount Elgin residential school in Muncey, Ontario. He died before the school opened. Toronto Public Library, [illegible]

to Protestantism. In the 1820s, John West, an Anglican missionary from England, opened a boarding school for Aboriginal students at Red River. Although these efforts also failed to take root, in 1831, the Mohawk Institute, a mission school on the Grand River in what is now Ontario, began taking in boarders. This school would remain in operation until 1970.

In 1847, Egerton Ryerson, the superintendent of schools for Upper Canada, recommended the establishment of residential schools in which Aboriginal students would be given instruction in "English language, arithmetic, elementary geometry, or knowledge of forms, geography and the elements of general history, natural history and agricultural chemistry, writing, drawing and vocal music, book-keeping (especially in reference to farmers' accounts) religion and morals." This he thought of as "a plain English education adapted to the working farmer and mechanic. In this their object is identical with that of every good common school." Pupils should be "taught agriculture, kitchen gardening, and mechanics, so far as mechanics is connected with making and repairing the most useful agricultural implements."

After the release of Ryerson's report, Methodist missionaries operated a number of boarding schools in southern Ontario in the 1850s. One of them, the Mount Elgin school at Munceytown (later, Muncey), did not close until 1946. The first of what would be a string of Roman Catholic residential schools in what is now British Columbia opened in the early 1860s. A school in Fort Providence in what is now the Northwest Territories began taking in students in 1867.

The colonization of the Northwest

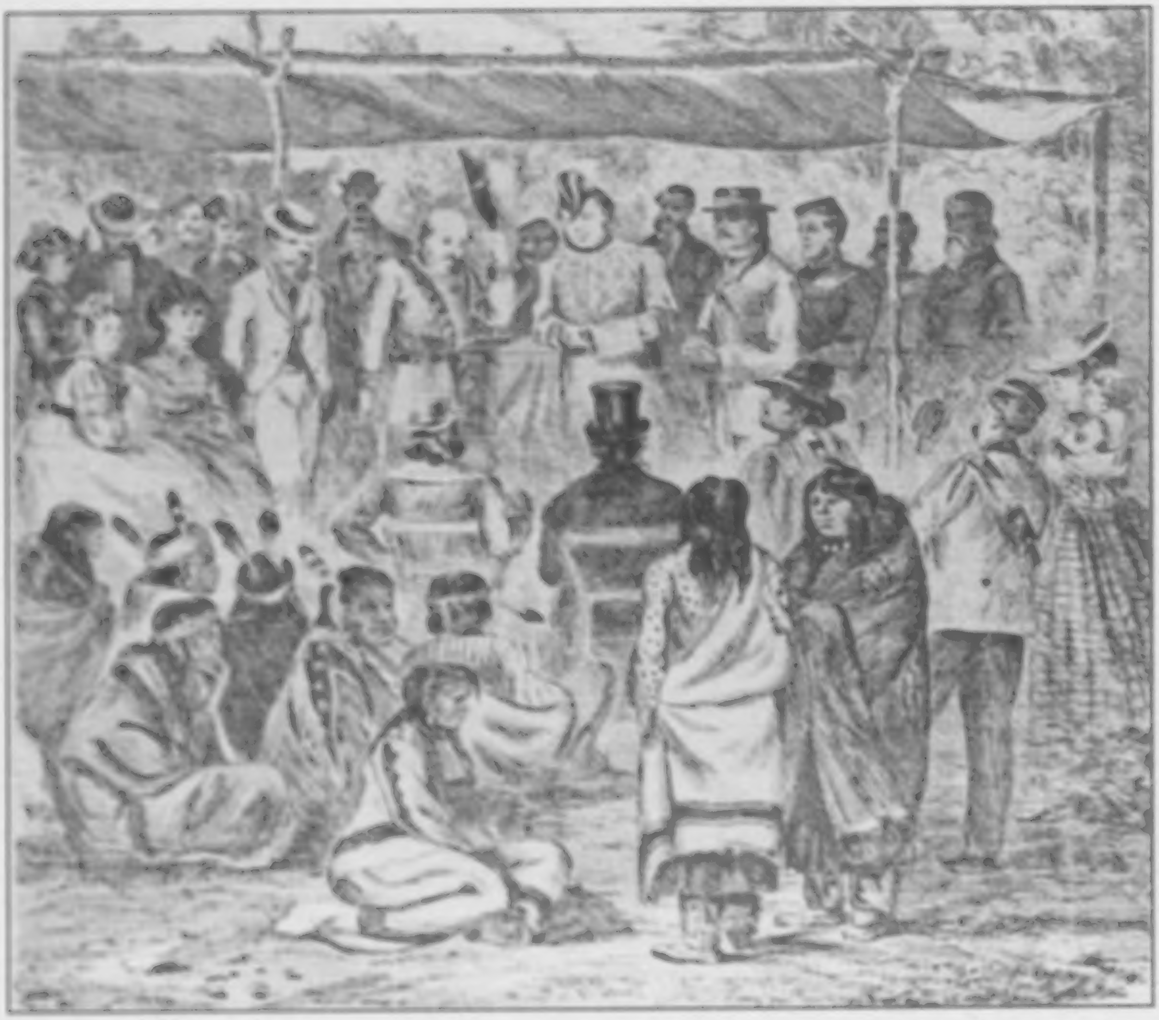
After the Canadian state was established in 1867, the federal government began making small per-student grants to many of the church-run boarding schools. Federal government involvement in residential schooling did not begin in earnest until the 1880s. The catalyst for this expansion was the 1870 transfer of much of contemporary Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, northern Québec, northern Ontario, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut from the Hudson's Bay Company to the Canadian government. The following year, British Columbia was brought into Confederation by the promise of a continental rail link.

Canadian politicians intended to populate the newly acquired lands with settlers from Europe and Ontario. These settlers were expected to buy goods produced in central Canada and ship their harvests by rail to western and eastern ports and then on to international markets. Settling the "Northwest"—as this territory came to be known—in this manner meant colonizing the over 40,000 Indigenous people who lived there.[48]

The Rupert's Land Order of 1870, which transferred much of the Northwest to Canadian control, required that "the claims of the Indian tribes to compensation for lands required for purposes of settlement will be considered and settled in conformity with the equitable principles which have uniformly governed the British Crown in its dealings with the aborigines."[49] These principles had been set down in the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which placed limits on the conditions under which Aboriginal land could be transferred. "If at any Time any of the Said Indians should be inclined to dispose of the said Lands," they could do so, but land could be sold only to the Crown, and the sale had to be at a meeting of Indians that had been held specifically for that purpose.[50] The Royal Proclamation, in effect, ruled that any future transfer of 'Indian' land would take the form of a Treaty between sovereigns.[51] In this, it stands as one of the clearest and earliest expressions of what has been identified as a long-standing element of Canadian Aboriginal policy.[52]

To enable the colonization of the Northwest, in 1871, the federal government began negotiating the first in a series of what came to be termed as "Numbered Treaties" with the First Nations of western and northern Canada. The only alternative to negotiating Treaties would have been to ignore the legal obligations of the Rupert's Land Order and attempt to subdue the First Nations militarily, but that would have been a very costly proposition. In 1870, when the entire Canadian government budget was $19 million, the United States was spending more than that—$20 million a year—on its Indian Wars alone. Despite all these pressures, the government took a slow and piecemeal approach to Treaty making.[53]

Through the Treaties, Aboriginal peoples were seeking agricultural supplies and training as well as relief during periods of epidemic or famine in a time of social and economic transition.[54] They saw the Treaty process as establishing a reciprocal relationship that would be lasting.[55] The goal was to gain the skills that would allow them to continue to control their own destinies and retain their culture and identity as Aboriginal people. As Ahtahkakoop (Star Blanket) said, "We Indians can learn the ways of living that made the white man strong."[56] The provisions varied from Treaty to Treaty, but they generally included funds for hunting and fishing supplies, agricultural assistance, yearly payments for band members (annuities), and an amount of reserve lands based on the population of the band.[57] First Nations never asked for residential schools as part of the Treaty process, and neither did the government suggest that such schools would be established. The education provisions also varied in different Treaties, but promised to pay for schools on



The signing of Treaty 1 at Lower Fort Garry, 1871. To gain control of the land of Indigenous people, colonists negotiated Treaties, waged wars of extinction, eliminated traditional landholding practices, disrupted families, and imposed new political and spiritual order that came complete with new values and cultural practices. Provincial Archives of Manitoba, N11975.

reserves or teachers. The federal government was slow to live up to its Treaty obligations. For example, many First Nations were settled on reserves that were much smaller than they were entitled to, while others were not provided with any reserve.[illegible] Some obligations remain unfulfilled to this day. The commitment to establish on-reserve schools was also ignored in many cases. As a result, parents who wished to see their children educated were forced to send them to residential schools.[illegible]

The assimilation policy

From the Canadian government's perspective, the most significant elements in the Treaties were the written provisions by which the First Nations agreed to "cede, release, surrender, and yield" their land to the Crown.[100] In the Treaty negotiations, however, federal officials left the impression that the government intended the Treaties to establish a permanent relationship with First Nations. Treaty Commissioner Alexander Morris told the Cree in 1876, "What I trust and hope we will do is not for to-day and tomorrow only; what I will promise, and what I believe and hope you will take, is to last as long as the sun shines and yonder river flows."[101] In reality, the federal government policy was very different from what Morris said. The intent of the government's policy, which was firmly established in legislation at the time that the Treaties had been negotiated, was to assimilate Aboriginal people into broader Canadian society. At the end of this process, Aboriginal people were expected to have ceased to exist as a distinct people with their own governments, cultures, and identities.

The federal *Indian Act*, first adopted in 1876, like earlier pre-Confederation legislation, defined who was and who was not an 'Indian' under Canadian law.[102] The Act also defined a process through which a person could lose status as an Indian. Women, for example, could lose status simply by marrying a man who did not have status. Men could lose status in a number of ways, including graduating from a university. Upon giving up their status, individuals also were granted a portion of the band's reserve land.[103]

First Nations people were unwilling to surrender their Aboriginal identity in this manner. Until 1920, other than women who involuntarily lost their Indian status upon marriage to a non-status individual, only 250 'Indians' voluntarily gave up their status.[104] In 1920, the federal government amended the *Indian Act* to give it the power to strip individuals of their status against their will. In explaining the purpose of the amendment to a parliamentary committee, Indian Affairs Deputy Minister Duncan Campbell Scott said that "our object is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic, and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department that is the whole object of this Bill."[105] The other major element in the bill that Scott was referring to empowered the government to compel parents to send their children to residential schools. Residential schooling was always more than simply an educational program: it was an integral part of a conscious policy of cultural genocide.

Further evidence of this assault on Aboriginal identity can be found in amendments to the *Indian Act* banning a variety of Aboriginal cultural and spiritual practices. The two most prominent of these were the west-coast Potlatch and the Prairie Thirst Dance (often referred to as the "Sun Dance").[106] Residential school principals had been in the forefront of the campaign to ban these ceremonies, and also urged the government to enforce the bans once they were put in place.[107]

SUN DANCE, BLACKFEET INDIANS
TRUEMAN VANCOUVER

This "Sun Dance" ceremony was one of the Aboriginal spiritual practices outlawed by the federal government in the nineteenth century. Library and Archives Canada, Trueman, C-0104106.

The Aboriginal right to self-government was also undermined. The *Indian Act* gave the federal government the authority to veto decisions made by band councils and to depose chiefs and councillors. The Act placed restrictions on First Nations farmers' ability to sell their crops and take out loans. Over the years, the government also assumed greater authority as to how reserve land could be disposed of: in some cases, entire reserves were relocated against the will of the residents. The *Indian Act* was a piece of colonial legislation by which, in the name of 'protection,' one group of people ruled and controlled another.

The industrial school initiative

It was in keeping with this intent to assimilate Aboriginal peoples and, in the process, to eliminate its government-to-government relationship with First Nations that the federal government dramatically increased its involvement in residential schooling in the 1880s. In December 1878, J. S. Dennis, the deputy minister of the Department of the Interior, prepared a memorandum for Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald on the country's

Aboriginal policy. Dennis advised Macdonald that the long-term goal should be to instruct "our Indian and half-breed populations" in farming, raising cattle, and the mechanical trades, rendering them self-sufficient. This would pave the way "for their emancipation from tribal government, and for their final absorption into the general community." Dennis argued that residential schools were key to fulfilling these goals. It was his opinion that in a short time, schools might become "self-sustaining institutions."[108]

In the following year, Nicholas Davin, a failed Conservative candidate, carried out a brief study of the boarding schools that the United States government had established for Native Americans. He recommended that Canada establish a series of such schools on the Prairies. Davin acknowledged that a central element of the education provided at these schools would be directed towards the destruction of Aboriginal spirituality. Since all civilizations were based on religion, it would be inexcusable, he thought, to do away with Aboriginal faith "without supplying a better [one]." For this reason, he recommended that while the government should fund the schools, the churches should operate them.[109]

The decision to continue to rely on the churches to administer the schools on a day-to-day basis had serious consequences. The government constantly struggled, and failed, to assert control over the churches' drive to increase the number of schools they operated. At various times, each denomination involved in school operation established boarding schools without government support or approval, and then lobbied later for per capita funding. When the churches concluded, quite legitimately, that the per capita grant they received was too low, they sought other types of increases in school funding. Building on their network of missions in the Northwest, the Catholics quickly came to dominate the field, usually operating twice as many schools as did the Protestant denominations. Among the Protestant churches, the Anglicans were predominant, establishing and maintaining more residential schools than the Methodists or the Presbyterians. The United Church, created by a union of Methodist and Presbyterian congregations, took over most of the Methodist and Presbyterian schools in the mid-1920s. Presbyterian congregations that did not participate in the union established the Presbyterian Church in Canada and retained responsibility for two residential schools. In addition to these national denominations, a local Baptist mission ran a residence for Aboriginal students in Whitehorse in the 1940s and 1950s, and a Mennonite ministry operated three schools in northwestern Ontario in the 1970s and 1980s. Each faith, in its turn, claimed government discrimination against it. Competition for converts meant that churches sought to establish schools in the same locations as their rivals, leading to internal divisions within communities and expensive duplication of services.

The model for these residential schools for Aboriginal children, both in Canada and the United States, did not come from the private boarding schools to which members of the economic elites in Britain and Canada sent their children. Instead, the model came from the reformatories and industrial schools that were being constructed in Europe and North America for the children of the urban poor. The British parliament adopted the

The Qu'Appelle school at Lebret in what is now Saskatchewan opened in 1884. O.B. Buell, Library and Archives Canada, PA-182246.

Reformatory Schools Act in 1854 and the *Industrial Schools Act* in 1857.[110] By 1882, over 17,000 children were in Britain's industrial schools.[111] Under Ontario's 1880 *Act for the Protection and Reformation of Neglected Children*, a judge could send children under the age of fourteen to an industrial school, where they might be required to stay until they turned eighteen.[112] Such schools could be dangerous and violent places. At the Halifax Boys Industrial School, first offenders were strapped, and repeat offenders were placed in cells on a bread-and-water ration. From there, they might be sent to the penitentiary.[113] The Canadian government also drew inspiration from the United States. There, the first in a series of large-scale, government-operated, boarding schools for Native Americans opened in 1879 in a former army barracks in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.[114]

On the basis of Davin's report and developments in the United States, the federal government decided to open three industrial schools. The first one opened in Battleford in what is now Saskatchewan in 1883. It was placed under the administration of an Anglican minister. The following year, two more industrial schools opened: one at Qu'Appelle in what is now Saskatchewan, and one at High River in what is now Alberta. Both these schools were administered by principals nominated by the Roman Catholic Oblate order. The federal government not only built these schools, but it also assumed all the costs of operating them. Recruiting students for these schools was difficult. According to the Indian Affairs annual report, in 1884, there were only twenty-seven students at the three schools.[115]

Unlike the church-run boarding schools, which provided a limited education with a heavy emphasis on religious instruction, the industrial schools were intended to prepare First Nations people for integration into Canadian society by teaching them basic trades, particularly farming. Generally, industrial schools were larger than boarding schools, were located in urban areas, and, although church-managed, usually required federal approval prior to construction. The boarding schools were smaller institutions, were located on or near reserves, and provided a more limited education. The differences between the industrial schools and the boarding schools eroded over time. By the 1920s, the federal government ceased to make any distinction between them, referring to them simply as "residential schools."

In justifying the investment in industrial schools to Parliament in 1883, Public Works Minister Hector Langevin argued that

> if you wish to educate these children you must separate them from their parents during the time that they are being educated. If you leave them in the family they may know how to read and write, but they still remain savages, whereas by separating them in the way proposed, they acquire the habits and tastes—it is to be hoped only the good tastes—of civilized people.[116]

The federal government entered into residential schooling at a time when it was colonizing Aboriginal lands in western Canada. It recognized that, through the Treaties, it had made commitments to provide Aboriginal people with relief in periods of economic distress. It also feared that as traditional Aboriginal economic pursuits were marginalized or eliminated by settlers, the government might be called upon to provide increased relief. In this context, the federal government chose to invest in residential schooling for a number of reasons. First, it would provide Aboriginal people with skills that would allow them to participate in the coming market-based economy. Second, it would further their political assimilation. It was hoped that students who were educated in residential schools would give up their status and not return to their reserve communities and families. Third, the schools were seen as engines of cultural and spiritual change: 'savages' were to emerge as Christian 'white men.' There was also a national security element to the schools. Indian Affairs official Andsell Macrae observed that "it is unlikely that any Tribe or Tribes would give trouble of a serious nature to the Government whose members had children completely under Government control."[117] Duncan Campbell Scott succinctly summarized Indian Affairs' goals for the schools in 1909: "It includes not only a scholastic education, but instruction in the means of gaining a livelihood from the soil or as a member of an industrial or mercantile community, and the substitution of Christian ideals of conduct and morals for aboriginal concepts of both."[118] The achievement of such invasive and ambitious goals would require a substantial level of funding. This was never forthcoming.

Funding: The dream of self-supporting schools

In announcing the construction of the three initial industrial schools, Indian Commissioner Edgar Dewdney said that although the starting costs would be high, he could see no reason why the schools would not be largely self-supporting in a few years, due to the skills in farming, raising stock, and trades that were being taught to the students.[illegible] In supporting an Anglican proposal for two industrial schools in Manitoba, Indian Affairs Deputy Minister Lawrence Vankoughnet wrote to Prime Minister Macdonald that it would be "well to give a Grant of money annually to each school established by any Denomination for the industrial training of Indian children." He said that system worked well in Ontario, and it "costs the Government less than the whole maintenance of the School would cost and it enlists the sympathies and assistance of the religious denominations in the education and industrial training of the Indian children."[illegible]

The government believed that between the forced labour of students and the poorly paid labour of missionaries, it could operate a residential school system on a nearly cost-free basis. The missionaries and the students were indeed a source of cheap labour—but the government was never happy with the quality of the teaching and, no matter how hard students worked, their labour never made the schools self-supporting. Soon after the government established the industrial schools, it began to cut salaries.[illegible] Initially, the federal government covered all the costs of operating the industrial schools. In 1892, this policy was abandoned in favour of one by which schools received a fixed amount per student (referred to as a "per capita grant").[illegible] The system both intensified the level of competition among churches for students and encouraged principals to accept students who should have been barred from admission because they were too young or too sick.[illegible]

The government never adequately responded to the belated discovery that the type of residential school system that officials had envisioned would cost far more than politicians were prepared to fund. In the early twentieth century, chronic underfunding led to a health crisis in the schools and a financial crisis for the missionary societies. Indian Affairs, with the support of leading figures in the Protestant churches, sought to dramatically reduce the number of residential schools, replacing them with day schools. The government abandoned the plan when it failed to receive the full support of all the churches involved in the operation of the schools.[illegible] Instead, in 1911, the federal government finally implemented a significant increase to the per capita grant received by boarding schools and attempted to impose basic health standards for the schools. This resulted in a short-term improvement. However, inflation eroded the value of the grant increase, and the grant was actually reduced repeatedly during the Great Depression and at the start of the Second World War.[illegible]

Funding for residential schools was always lower than funding for comparable institutions in Canada and the United States that served the general population. In 1937, Indian Affairs was paying, on average, $180 a year per student. This was less than a third of the per capita costs at that time for the Manitoba School for the Deaf ($642.40) and the Manitoba School for Boys ($550). In the United States, the annual per capita cost at the Chilocco Indian Residential School in Oklahoma in 1937 was $350. According to the American Child Welfare League, the per capita costs for well-run institutions in that country ranged between $313 and $541.[illegible] It would not be until the 1950s that changes were made in the funding system in Canada that were intended to ensure that the schools could recruit qualified teachers and improve the student diets.[illegible] Even these improvements did not end the inequity in residential school funding. In 1966, residential schools in Saskatchewan were spending between $694 and $1,193 a year per student.[illegible] Comparable child-welfare institutions in Canada were spending between $3,300 and $8,022 a year. In the United States, the annual cost of residential care per child was between $4,300 and $11,000.[illegible]

Compelling attendance

It was not until 1894 that the federal government put in place regulations relating to residential school attendance. Under the regulations adopted in that year, residential school attendance was voluntary. However, if an Indian agent or justice of the peace thought that any "Indian child between six and sixteen years of age is not being properly cared for or educated, and that the parent, guardian or other person having charge or control of such child, is unfit or unwilling to provide for the child's education," he could issue an order to place the child "in an industrial or boarding school, in which there may be a vacancy for such child."

If a child placed in the school under these regulations left a residential school without permission, or did not return at a promised time, school officials could get a warrant from an Indian agent or a justice of the peace authorizing them (or a police officer, truant officer, or employee of the school or Indian Affairs) to "search for and take such child back to the school in which it had been previously placed." With a warrant, one could enter—by force if need be—any house, building, or place named in the warrant and remove the child. Even without a warrant, Indian Affairs employees and constables had the authority to arrest a student in the act of escaping from a residential school and return the child to the school.[illegible]

It was departmental policy that no child could be discharged without departmental approval—even if the parents had enrolled the child voluntarily. The government had no legislative basis for this policy. Instead, it relied on the admission form that parents were supposed to sign. (In some cases, school staff members signed these forms.)[illegible] By 1892, the department required that all parents sign an admission form when they enrolled their children in a residential school. In signing the form, parents gave their consent that "the Principal or head teacher of the Institution for the time being shall be the guardian" of the child. In that year, the Department of Justice provided Indian Affairs with a legal

[illegible]

opinion to the effect that "the fact of a parent having signed such an application is not sufficient to warrant the forcible arrest against the parents' will of a minor child who has been admitted to an Industrial School pursuant to the application." It was held that, without legislative authority, no form could provide school administrators with the power of arrest.[illegible] Despite this warning, well into the twentieth century, Indian Affairs would continue to enforce policies regarding attendance for which it had no legal authority.[illegible] This is not the only example of the government's use of unauthorized measures. In the 1930s, students were to be discharged from residential school when they turned sixteen. Despite this, William Graham, the Indian commissioner, refused to authorize discharge until the students turned eighteen. He estimated that, on this basis, he rejected approximately 100 applications for discharge a year.[illegible]

In 1920, the Indian Act was amended to allow the government to compel any First Nations child to attend residential school. However, residential school was never compulsory for all First Nations children. In most years, there were more First Nations children attending Indian Affairs day schools than residential schools. During the early 1930s, this pattern was reversed. In the 1944–45 school year there were 8,865 students in residential schools and 7,573 students in Indian Affairs day schools. In that year, there were

[illegible]

[illegible]

Regulations

[illegible]

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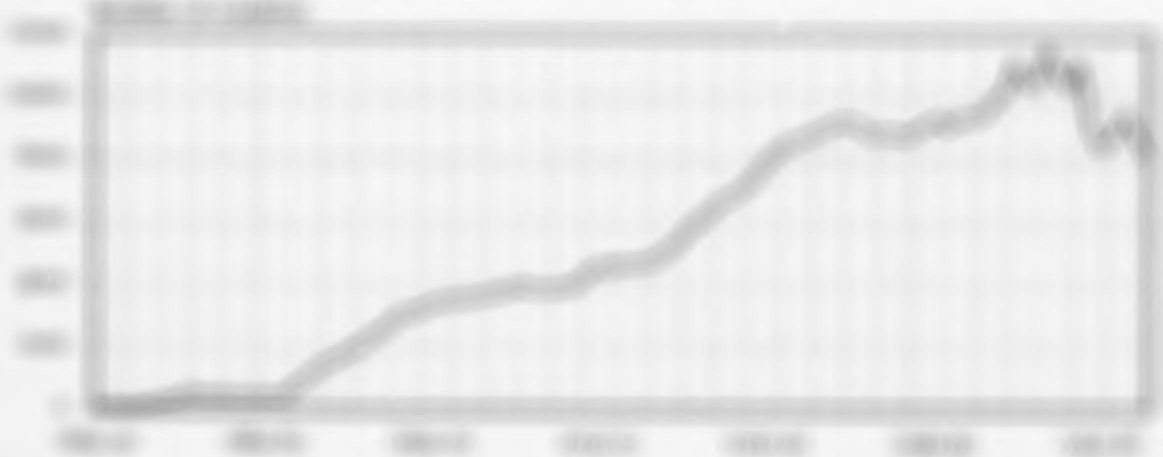

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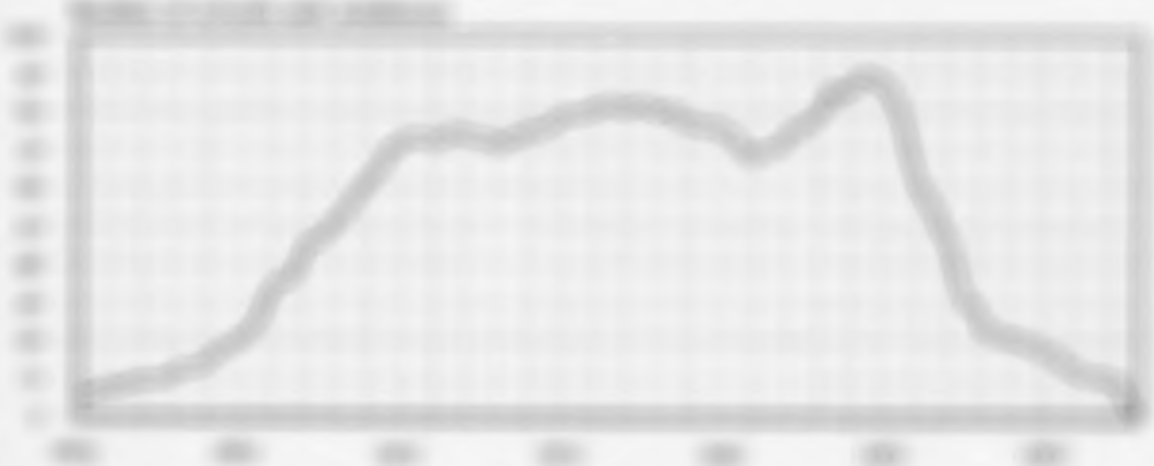

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Fleming Hall, the Anglican-run hostel opened by the federal government in Fort McPherson, Northwest Territories, as part of its expansion of residential schools in northern Canada in the late 1950s and early 1960s. General Synod Archives, Anglican Church of Canada, [illegible].

was accompanied by the opening of what were termed "small hostels" in the smaller and more remote communities of the eastern Arctic and the western Northwest Territories.

Policy towards Métis and Inuit students

Many of the early advocates of residential schooling in Canada expected that the schools would take in both Aboriginal children who had status under the *Indian Act* (in other words, they were Indians as defined by the *Act*) as well as Aboriginal children who, for a variety of reasons, did not have status. The federal government classed these individuals alternately as "non-status Indians," "half-breeds," or "Métis."[illegible]

The early church-run boarding schools made no distinction between status and non-status or Métis children.[illegible] The federal government position on the matter was constantly shifting. It viewed the Métis as members of the 'dangerous classes' whom the residential schools were intended to civilize and assimilate.[illegible] This view led to the adoption of

Métis children at the Dawson City, Yukon, residence. General Synod Archives, Anglican Church of Canada, P75-103-S8-264.

policies that allowed for the admission of Métis children to the schools at various times.[133] However, from a jurisdictional perspective, the federal government believed that the responsibility for educating and assimilating Métis people lay with provincial and territorial governments. There was a strong concern that if the federal government began providing funding for the education of some of the children the provinces and territories were responsible for, it would find itself subject to having to take responsibility for the rest.[134] When this view dominated, Indian agents would be instructed to remove Métis students from residential schools.[135]

Despite their perceived constitutional responsibility, provincial and territorial governments were reluctant to provide services to Métis people. They did not ensure that there were schools in Métis communities, or work to see that Métis children were admitted and welcomed into the general public school system.[136] Many Métis parents who wished to see their children educated in schools had no option but to try to have them accepted into a residential school. In some cases, these would be federally funded schools, but, in other cases, Métis students attended church-run schools or residences that did not receive federal funding.[137]

Provincial governments slowly began to provide increased educational services to Métis students after the Second World War. As a result, Métis children lived in residences and residential schools that were either run or funded by provincial governments. The Métis experience is an important reminder that the impacts of residential schooling extend beyond the formal residential school program that Indian Affairs operated.[138]

Inuit children were recruited to a school in Shingle Point in the Yukon in the 1920s. General Synod Archives, Anglican Church of Canada, P9901-579.

Prior to the 1950s, most of the students who attended schools in the Northwest Territories were either First Nations or Métis. As late as 1949, only 111 Inuit students were receiving full-time schooling in the North.[109] The hostel system that Northern Affairs established in the Northwest Territories in the mid-1950s did not restrict admission to First Nations students. It was only at this point that large numbers of Inuit children began attending residential schools. The impact of the schools on the Inuit was complex. Some children were sent to schools thousands of kilometres from their homes, and went years without seeing their parents. In other cases, parents who had previously been supporting themselves by following a seasonal cycle of land- and marine-based resource harvesting began settling in communities with hostels so as not to be separated from their children.

Because of the majority of the Aboriginal population in two of the three northern territories, the per capita impact of the schools in the North is higher than anywhere else in the country. And, because the history of these schools is so recent, not only are there many living Survivors today, but there are also many living parents of Survivors. For these reasons, both the intergenerational impacts and the legacy of the schools, the good and the bad, are particularly strongly felt in the North.

The integration policy

By 1945, the Indian Affairs residential school system, starved for funding for fifteen years, was on the verge of collapse.[160] Not only was the existing Indian Affairs education system lacking money and resources, but also there were no school facilities of any sort for 42% of the school-aged First Nations children.[161] Having concluded that it was far too expensive to provide residential schooling to these students, Indian Affairs began to look for alternatives. One was to expand the number of Indian Affairs day schools. From 1945–46 to 1954–55, the number of First Nations students in Indian Affairs day schools increased from 9,532 to 17,947.[162] In 1949, the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons Appointed to Examine and Consider *The Indian Act* recommended "that wherever and whenever possible Indian children should be educated in association with other children."[163] In 1951, the *Indian Act* was amended to allow the federal government to enter into agreements with provincial governments and school boards to have First Nations students educated in public schools.[164] By 1960, the number of students attending "non-Indian" schools (9,479) had surpassed the number living in residential schools (9,471).[165] The transfer of First Nations students into the public school system was described as "integration." By then, the overall policy goal was to restrict the education being given in Indian Affairs schools to the lower grades. Therefore, it was expected that during the course of their schooling, at least half of the students then in Indian Affairs schools would transfer to a 'non-Indian' school.[166]

The integration policy was opposed by some of the church organizations. Roman Catholic church officials argued that residential schooling was preferable for three reasons: 1) teachers in public schools were not prepared to deal with Aboriginal students; 2) students in public schools often expressed racist attitudes towards Aboriginal students; and 3) Aboriginal students felt acute embarrassment over their impoverished conditions, particularly in terms of the quality of the clothing they wore and the food they ate.[167] These were all issues that students and parents raised, as well.[168]

Child-welfare facilities

From the 1940s onwards, residential schools increasingly served as orphanages and child-welfare facilities. By 1960, the federal government estimated that 50% of the children in residential schools were there for child-welfare reasons. What has come to be referred to as the "Sixties Scoop"—the dramatic increase in the apprehension of Aboriginal children from the 1960s onwards—was in some measure simply a transferring of children from one form of institution, the residential school, to another, the child-welfare agency.[169] The schools were not funded or staffed to function as child-welfare institutions. They failed to provide their students with the appropriate level of personal and emotional care children need during their childhood and adolescence. This failure applied to all students, but was of particular significance in the case of the growing number of social-welfare placements in the schools.[170] Some children had to stay in the schools year-round because it was thought there was no safe home to which they could return. The residential school environment was not a safer or more loving haven. These children spent their entire childhoods in an institution.

The closure of residential schools, which commenced in earnest in 1970, was accompanied by a significant increase in the number of children being taken into care by child-welfare agencies.[171] By the end of the 1970s, the transfer of children from residential schools was nearly complete in southern Canada, and the impact of the Sixties Scoop was in evidence across the country. In 1977, Aboriginal children accounted for 44% of the children in care in Alberta, 51% of the children in care in Saskatchewan, and 60% of the children in care in Manitoba.[172] In those residences that remained in operation, the percentage of social-welfare cases remained high.[173]

The road to closure, 1969

In 1968, the federal government drastically restructured the residential school system by dividing the schools into residences and day schools, each with a principal or administrator.[174] In June of the following year, the federal government took direct control over all the schools in southern Canada.[175] Because churches were allowed to continue to appoint the residence administrators, their presence continued in many schools in the coming years. They were, however, no longer directly responsible for the facilities.[176] In 1969, the federal government also began to transfer the hostels and day schools in the Yukon and Northwest Territories to their respective territorial governments. Most of the small hostels in the eastern Arctic and Nunavik (Arctic Québec) were closed by the end of 1971. (Four small hostels were also operated in the western and central Arctic. The last of these, located at Cambridge Bay, did not close until the late 1990s.)[177]

Having assumed control over the southern Canadian schools in 1969, the federal government commenced what would prove to be a protracted process of closing the system down. According to the Indian Affairs annual report for 1968–69, the department was responsible for sixty residences. Two years later, the number was down to forty-five.[178] The government takeover of the residential schools also coincided with the release of the federal government's White Paper on "Indian Policy." This document proposed a massive transfer of responsibility for First Nations people from the federal to provincial governments.[179] It called for the repeal of the *Indian Act*, the winding up of the Department of Indian Affairs, and the eventual extinguishment of the Treaties.[180] The recently formed National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) described the White Paper as a document intended to bring about "the destruction of a Nation of People by legislation and cultural genocide."[181]

In its response, the NIB proposed "Indian Control of Indian Education."[182] In 1971, Indian Affairs Minister Jean Chrétien announced that, in the face of First Nations resistance, the federal government was abandoning the policy directions outlined in the White Paper.[183]

By then, First Nations communities had already taken over one residential school. In the summer of 1970, parents of children at the Blue Quills, Alberta, school occupied the school, demanding that its operation be turned over to a First Nations education authority. They took this measure in response to reports that the school was to be turned into a residence and their children were to be educated at a nearby public school. The Blue Quills conflict was the result of both long-standing local dissatisfaction with the administration of the school and First Nations opposition to the policy of integration.[184] It was estimated that over 1,000 people participated in the sit-in, with rarely fewer than 200 people being at the school on any given day.[185] Seventeen days after the sit-in commenced, Minister Jean Chrétien announced that the school would be transferred to the Blue Quills Native Education Council.[186] In coming years, the Qu'Appelle, Prince Albert, Duck Lake, Lestock, and Grayson facilities in Saskatchewan were also taken over by First Nations authorities. The Christie residence in Tofino, British Columbia, was also operated briefly by an Aboriginal authority.[187]

The federal government, however, remained committed to the closing of the facilities. Because of the government's lengthy history of underfunding residential schools, many of the schools were in poor repair. Between 1995 and 1998, the last seven residences in southern Canada were closed.[188]

Starting in the 1970s, territorial governments, in which former residential school students were serving as cabinet ministers, also began expanding the number of day schools as part of a campaign to close residential schools in the North. The last large hostel in the Yukon closed in 1985.[189] By 1986, there were only three large hostels operating in the Northwest Territories.[190] Grollier Hall, the last large hostel in the North, closed in 1997.[191] If one dates the residential school system back to the early 1830s, when the Mohawk Institute first took in boarders, the system had been in operation for over 160 years. The closing of the schools did not mark the end of the history of residential schooling in Canada. By the 1990s, former students had begun to make Canadians aware of the tremendous harm that the residential school experience had caused to Aboriginal people and Aboriginal communities.

The classroom in the Moose Factory, Ontario, school. General Synod Archives, Anglican Church of Canada, P7538-970.

The school experience

Education: "The children's work was merely memory work."

As educational institutions, the residential schools were failures, and regularly judged as such. In 1923, former Regina industrial school principal R. B. Heron delivered a paper to a meeting of the Regina Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church that was highly critical of the residential school system. He said that parents generally were anxious to have their children educated, but they complained that their children "are not kept regularly in the class-room; that they are kept out at work that produces revenue for the School; that when they return to the Reserves they have not enough education to enable them to transact ordinary business—scarcely enough to enable them to write a legible letter."[192] The schools' success rate did not improve. From 1940–41 to 1959–60, 41.3% of each year's residential school Grade One enrolment was not promoted to Grade Two.[193] Just over half of those who were in Grade Two would get to Grade Six.[194]

Many principals and teachers had low expectations of their students. Wikwemikong, Ontario, principal R. Baudin wrote in 1883, "What we may reasonably expect from the

Members of the Crusaders, a religious society for youth at the Fort Frances, Ontario, school. St. Boniface Historical Society Archives, Fonds of the Grey Nuns of Manitoba, [illegible].

generality of children, is certainly not to make great scholars of them. Good and moral as they may be, they lack great mental capacity." He did not think it wise to expect them to "be equal in every respect to their white brethren."[illegible] In preparing a 1928 report on the Anglican school at Onion Lake, a Saskatchewan government school inspector expressed his belief that "in arithmetic abstract ideas develop slowly in the Indian child."[illegible] Some thought it was a risky matter to give the students too much education. Mount Elgin principal S. R. McVitty wrote in 1928 that "classroom work is an important part of our training, but not by any means the most important." He added, "In the case of the Indian 'a little learning is a dangerous thing.'"[illegible]

Much of what went on in the classroom was simply repetitious drill. A 1915 report on the Roman Catholic school on the Blood Reserve in Alberta noted, "The children's work was merely memory work and did not appear to be developing any deductive power, altogether too parrot like and lacking expression."[illegible] A 1932 inspector's report from the Grayson, Saskatchewan, school suggests there had been little change. "The teaching as I saw it today was merely a question of memorizing and repeating a mass of, to the children, 'meaningless' facts."[illegible]

The classrooms were often severely overcrowded. At the Qu'Appelle school in 1911, Sister McGurk had seventy-five girls in her junior classroom. The inspector of Roman Catholic schools reported to Ottawa that this was an "almost impossible" situation.[illegible] In 1915, two teachers were responsible for 120 students at the Coqualeetza Institute in Chilliwack, British Columbia.[illegible] In 1928, there were sixty students in the junior classroom at the Alberni, British Columbia, school.[illegible]

The Indian Affairs schools branch maintained that the principals and the staff were "appointed by the church authorities, subject to the approval of the Department as to qualifications."[illegible] In reality, the churches hired staff and the government then automatically approved their selections.[illegible] The churches placed a greater priority on religious commitment than on teaching ability.[illegible] Because the pay was so low, many of the teachers lacked any qualification to teach.[illegible] In 1908, Indian Affairs inspector F. H. Paget reported that at the Battleford school, "frequent changes in the staff at this school has not been to its advantage." The problem lay not with the principal, but with the fact that "more profitable employment is available in the District and, furthermore, the salaries paid are not as high as are paid in other public institutions."[illegible] When a British Columbia Indian agent recommended that schools be required to hire only qualified staff, he was told by his superior, British Columbia Indian Superintendent A. W. Vowell, that such a requirement would result in the churches' applying for "larger grants." And, as Vowell understood it, Indian Affairs "is not at present disposed to entertain requests for increased grants to Indian boarding and industrial schools."[illegible] In 1955, 55 (23%) of the 241 teachers in residential schools directly employed by Indian Affairs had no teacher's certificate.[illegible] In 1969, Indian Affairs reported it was still paying its teachers less than they could make in provincial schools. "As a result, there are about the same number of unqualified teachers, some 100, in federal schools [residential and non-residential] now, as ten years ago."[illegible]

In the minds of some principals, religious training was the most valuable training the schools provided. In 1903, Brandon, Manitoba, principal T. Ferrier wrote that "while it is very important that the Indian child should be educated, it is of more importance that he should build up a good clean character." Such a heavy emphasis was required, in Ferrier's opinion, to "counteract the evil tendencies of the Indian nature."[illegible] Louise Moine recalled that religious instruction and observation were a constant part of life at the Qu'Appelle school in the early twentieth century: "From the time we got out of bed at the sound of the bell, we went down on our knees to pray. After we had washed and dressed, we headed for the chapel to attend Low mass which was always held at 7 a.m."[illegible] The staff handbook for the Presbyterian school in Kenora in the 1940s stated it was expected that, upon leaving the school, most students would "return to the Indian Reserves from which they had come." Given this future, staff members were told that "the best preparation we can give them is to teach them the Christian way of life."[illegible]

Not surprisingly, many of those who succeeded academically followed careers in the church. Coqualeetza graduate Peter Kelly became a Methodist Church minister. Emmanuel College graduate Edward Ahenakew became an Anglican minister. Others worked for government or taught school. Qu'Appelle graduate Daniel Kennedy became an interpreter and general assistant for the Assiniboine Indian Agency. Joseph Dion, a graduate of the Onion Lake school, taught school for many years in Saskatchewan. Still others pursued business and professional careers. After attending the Mohawk Institute, Beverly Johnson went to Hellmuth College in London, Ontario, where he excelled at sports and drama. He then went to work for the New York Life Insurance Company in Pennsylvania. A graduate of the Mohawk Institute, W. E. [illegible], was called to the bar in 1938 and was described by the *Brantford Expositor* as the "First Ontario Indian Lawyer."[illegible]

Despite these successes, little encouragement generally was offered to students who wished to pursue further education. Oliver Martin, who was raised on the Six Nations Reserve in Ontario and went on to become an Ontario magistrate, recalled being told by Indian Affairs Deputy Minister Duncan Campbell Scott, "It's no use sending you Indians to school you just go back to the reserve anyway."[illegible]

For many students, classroom life was foreign and traumatic. David Charleson said he found the regimentation at the Christie, British Columbia, school so disturbing that he "never wanted to learn, so I jumped into my shell. I took Kindergarten twice because of what happened to me. I didn't want to learn."[illegible] At the Birtle school in Manitoba, Isabelle Whitford said, she had a hard time adjusting to the new language and the classroom discipline. "Every time I couldn't get an answer, like, you know, she would pull my ears and shake my head."[illegible] Betsy Olson described class work at the Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, school as a torment, in which her "spelling was always 10, 10, it was way down. And when we did spelling, sometimes I freeze. I couldn't move, I just scribbled because I couldn't move my hand."[illegible] Louise Agawa never felt comfortable in the classroom at the Spanish, Ontario, school. For much of her time in school, she was frightened or intimidated. "I'd hear my name, but I never got to answer. I stood up, never got to answer what they were saying when they sat me down. And I'd get a good slap after, after you, you learn there for not being nice in school."[illegible]

Since the 1920s, Indian Affairs had required residential schools to adopt provincial curricula.[illegible] The department had also asked provincial governments to have their school inspectors inspect Indian Affairs schools.[illegible] The wisdom of this practice had been questioned during the hearings of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons Inquiry into the *Indian Act* in the 1940s. Andrew Moore, a secondary school inspector for the Province of Manitoba, told the committee members that Indian Affairs took full responsibility for all aspects of First Nations education, including curriculum.[illegible] Provincial education departments, including the one he worked for, were "not organized or not interested in Indian schools."[illegible]

In 1963, D. W. Hepburn, the former principal of the federal school in Inuvik, published an article with the ominous headline "Northern Education: Façade for Failure." He argued that the education being provided in the new federal schools was "hopelessly inadequate. The reasons for this failure are clear: the aims of education set forth by the Department are thoroughly confused, the curriculum is inappropriate, and many current practices of the system are not only ill-conceived but actually harmful."[illegible] Although 60% of the students at the Inuvik school were in the first three grades, few teachers had any background in primary education, and "almost none has any special training in native education, and will receive none from the Department."[illegible] The schools were producing individuals who "lack not only the skills required for most permanent wage employment but also those necessary for the traditional economy.[illegible]

The decision to leave curriculum to provincial education departments meant that Aboriginal students were subjected to an education that distorted their history, ignored their current situation, and did not even recognize them or their families as citizens. This was one of the reasons for the growing Aboriginal hostility to the Indian Affairs integration policy. An examination of the treatment of Aboriginal people in provincially approved textbooks reveals a serious and deep-rooted problem. In response to a 1956 recommendation that textbooks be developed that were relevant to Aboriginal students, Indian Affairs official R. F. Davey commented, "The preparation of school texts is an extremely difficult matter." It was his opinion that "there are other needs which can be met more easily and should be undertaken first."[illegible] In the following years, assessments of public school textbooks showed that they continued to perpetuate racist stereotypes of Aboriginal people.[illegible] A 1968 survey pointed out that in some books, the word savage was being used to describe Aboriginal women, and the word redskin used to describe Aboriginal people.[illegible]

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Mount Elgin, Ontario, laundry room. Clothes wringers, such as the one shown here, were a source of injury at a number of residential schools. The United Church of Canada Archives, [illegible].

this school for several years and all the girls are familiar with its operation." Indian Affairs secretary A. F. MacKenzie concluded that "all the necessary precautions were taken, and, while the accident to Florence McLeod is regretted, it was through no fault of the school management."[illegible] The school's failure to protect its students can be seen in the fact that McLeod's father, Henry, had been injured in a similar fashion when he was a student at the same school.[illegible] In 1941, a twelve-year-old boy lost all the fingers on one hand in an accident in the Brandon, Manitoba, school barn.[illegible] Eight years later, fifteen-year-old Rodney Beardy died in a tractor accident at the same school.[illegible] A student at the Edmonton school lost a foot in 1944 after an accident during the operation of a machine used in the preparation of fodder.[illegible] Two boys from the Birtle, Manitoba, school were injured in a truck accident in 1952. From Indian Affairs correspondence, it appears that the accident involved a truck carrying seventy boys who were being taken from the school to the fields to do farm work. Indian Affairs official R. A. Hoey criticized the principal for allowing the practice to take place, noting that "it is almost unbelievable that the principal should permit 70 pupils to be conveyed in a truck."[illegible]

Even though the half-day system was supposedly eliminated in the early 1950s, students continued to be overworked.[illegible] After Sam Ross ran away from the Birtle school in 1958, he told Indian Affairs official J. R. Bell that he wanted to continue his education, but had been forced to work "too hard" at the school. He said that from September to Christmas of the previous year, he had worked in the school barn every day between "6:00 A.M. and 7:00 A.M. and from 8:00 A.M. to 9:00 A.M. again at recess, from 4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. and had had to stoke up the furnace with coal at 10:00 o'clock before retiring." Ross said that "he liked school but not working like a hired hand." Bell recommended that the amount of student labour being done at the Birtle school be investigated.[200]

Language and culture: "The Indian language is indeed seldom heard in the institution."

The government's hostile approach to Aboriginal languages was reiterated in numerous policy directives. In 1883, Indian Commissioner Edgar Dewdney instructed Battleford school principal Thomas Clarke that great attention was to be given "towards imparting a knowledge of the art of reading, writing and speaking the English language rather than that of Cree."[201] In 1889, Deputy Minister of Indian Affairs Lawrence Vankoughnet informed Bishop Paul Durieu that in the new Cranbrook, British Columbia, school, mealtime conversations were to be "conducted exclusively in the English language." The principal was also to set a fixed time during which Aboriginal languages could be spoken.[202] In 1890, Indian Commissioner Hayter Reed proposed, "At the most the native language is only to be used as a vehicle of teaching and should be discontinued as such as soon as practicable." English was to be the primary language of instruction, "even where French is taught."[203] The Indian Affairs "Programme of Studies for Indian Schools" of 1893 advised, "Every effort must be made to induce pupils to speak English, and to teach them to understand it; unless they do the whole work of the teacher is likely to be wasted."[204]

Principals regularly reported on their success in suppressing Aboriginal languages. In 1887, Principal E. Claude boasted that his thirty students at the High River school "all understand English passably well and few are unable to express themselves in English. They talk English in recreation. I scarcely need any coercive means to oblige them to do so."[205] In 1898, the Kamloops principal reported that "English is the only language used at all times by the pupils."[206] That same year, the Mission, British Columbia, principal wrote, "English is the common language of the school, the Indian language is indeed seldom heard in the institution, except with the newly arrived pupils."[207] The 1898 report from the principal of the Anglican school at Onion Lake indicated that the school was one of the few exceptions. There, the children were taught to "read and write both Cree and English."[208] Inspectors viewed the continued use of Aboriginal languages by the students as a sign of failure. The principal of the Red Deer school was taken to task in 1903 by an inspector who felt that a "serious drawback to school work, as well as an evidence of bad discipline, was the use of the Cree language, which was quite prevalent."[209]

This policy of language suppression continued well into the twentieth century. After a 1935 tour of Canada, Oblate Superior General Théodore Labouré expressed concern over

Inuit students at the Joseph Bernier School, Chesterfield Inlet, 1956. Diocese of Churchill Hudson Bay.

the strict enforcement of prohibitions against speaking Aboriginal languages. In his opinion, "The forbidding of children to speak Indian, even during recreation, was so strict in some of our schools that any lapse would be severely punished—to the point that children were led to consider it a serious offense."[270]

Students had strong memories of being punished for 'speaking Indian.' Mary Angus, who attended the Battleford school in the late nineteenth century, said that students caught speaking their own language were given a close haircut: "All the hair cut to be as a man, that what they do, for us not to talk. We were afraid of that, to have our hair cut."[271] At the Fraser Lake school in British Columbia, Mary John said she could speak her own language only in whispers.[272] Melvina McNabb was seven years old when she was enrolled in the File Hills school, and "I couldn't talk a word of English. I talked Cree and I was abused for that, hit, and made to try to talk English."[273] Raymond Hill, who was a student at the Mohawk Institute in Brantford in the early years of the twentieth century, said, "I lost my language. They threatened us with a strapping if we spoke it, and within a year I lost all of it. They said they thought we were talking about them."[274]

Language use often continued in secret. Mary Englund recalled that while Aboriginal languages were banned at the Mission school in the early twentieth century, children would still speak it to one another.[275] Clyde Peters said he stopped speaking his Aboriginal language at the Mount Elgin school after he found out the school punished students for doing so. "I never got the strap for it but I was warned enough that I didn't do it." Even after that, he and his friends would speak to each other when they thought no one else could hear them. "When we'd go up in the dormitories in the evening I had a friend from Sarnia who I could talk with."[276]

Many of the students came to the school fluent in an Aboriginal language, with little or no understanding of French or English. This trend continued well into the post-war period. For these children, the first few months in the school were disorienting and frightening. Arthur McKay arrived at the Sandy Bay, Manitoba, school in the early 1940s with no knowledge of English. "They told me not to speak my language and everything, so I always pretended to be asleep at my desk so they wouldn't ask me anything."[277] Peter Nakogee recalled being punished for writing in his notebook in Cree syllabics at the Fort Albany, Ontario, school.[278]

Meeka Alivaktuk came to the Pangnirtung school in what is now Nunavut with no knowledge of English. When she failed to obey an instruction because she did not understand it, she was slapped on the hands. "That's how my education began."[279] On his first day of school in Pangnirtung, the teacher overheard Sam Kautainuk speaking to a friend in Inuktitut. "He took a ruler and grabbed my head like this and then smacked me in the mouth with the ruler four times."[280]

At the Qu'Appelle school in the mid-1960s, Greg Rainville said, he was punished for failing to carry out instructions given to him in a language he did not understand. "The nuns would get frustrated with you when they talked to you in French or English, and you're not knowing what they're talking about, and you're pulled around by the ear."[281] At the Shubenacadie school, a staff member once caught William Herney speaking Mi'kmaq with his brother. She strapped him and then washed his mouth out with soap.[282] Alphonsine McNeely underwent the same punishment at the Roman Catholic school at Aklavik in the 1940s.[283] Pierrette Benjamin said she was forced to eat soap at the La Tuque school. "The principal, she put it in my mouth, and she said, 'Eat it, eat it.'"[284]

The language policy disrupted families. When John Kistabish left the Amos, Québec, school, he could no longer speak Algonquin, and his parents could not speak French, the language that he had been taught in the school. As a result, he found it almost impossible to communicate with them about the abuse he experienced at the school. "I had tried to talk with my parents, and, no, it didn't work.... We were well anyway because I knew that they were my parents, when I left the residential school, but the communication wasn't there."[285]

Culture was attacked as well as language. In his memoirs, Stoney Chief John Snow tells of how at the Morley, Alberta, school, the "education consisted of nothing that had any relationship to our homes and culture. Indeed Stoney culture was condemned explicitly and implicitly." He recalled being taught that the only good people on earth were non-Indians and, specifically, white Christians.[286] Andrew Bull Calf recalled that at the residential school in Cardston, Alberta, students were not only punished for speaking their own languages, but they also were discouraged from participating in traditional cultural activities.[287] Evelyn Kelman recalled that the principal at the Brocket, Alberta, school warned students that if they attended a Sun Dance that was to be held during the summer, they would be strapped on their return to school.[288] Marilyn Buffalo recalled being told by Hobbema, Alberta, school staff that the Sun Dance was 'devil worship.'[289] One year, Sarah McLeod returned to the Kamloops school with a miniature totem pole that a family member had given her for her birthday. When she proudly showed it to one of the nuns, it was taken from her and thrown out. She was told that it was nothing but devilry.[290]

School officials did not limit their opposition to Aboriginal culture to the classroom. In 1942, Gleichen, Alberta, principal John House became involved in a campaign to have two Blackfoot chiefs deposed, in part because of their support for traditional dance ceremonies.[291] In 1943, F. E. Anfield, the principal of the Alert Bay, British Columbia, school, wrote a letter encouraging former students not to participate in local Potlatches, implying that such ceremonies were based on outdated superstition, and led to impoverishment and family neglect.[292]

Even when it did not directly disparage Aboriginal culture, the curriculum undermined Aboriginal identity. Thaddee Andre, who attended the Sept-Îles, Québec, school in the 1950s, recalled how as a student he wanted "to resemble the white man, then in the meantime, they are trying by all means to strip you of who you are as an Innu. When you are young, you are not aware of what you are losing as a human being."[293]

It was not until the 1960s that attitudes began to change about the place of Aboriginal language and culture in residential schools.[294] Alex Alikashuak said that at the Churchill school, which operated in the 1960s, there were no restrictions on the use of Aboriginal languages. He recalled, "The only time, real time we spoke English was when we were in the classroom, or we're talking to one of the administration staff, and or somebody from town that's not Inuit, but otherwise we, everybody spoke our language."[295] The Canadian Welfare Council's 1967 report on nine Saskatchewan residential schools described "an emphasis on relating course content to the Indian culture" as "imaginative" and a sign of progress in "making the educational experience meaningful for the Indian child."[296] By 1968, the Roman Catholic school in Cardston was incorporating Blackfoot into its educational program.[297] In some schools, Aboriginal teachers were brought in to teach dancing and singing.[298] However, as late as the 1969–70 school year, there were only seven Indian Affairs schools that offered courses in Aboriginal languages or used Aboriginal languages as the language of instruction.[299]

Despite the encouragement that was offered in some schools, and the students' efforts to keep their language alive, the overall impact was language loss. Of her experiences at the Baptist school in Whitehorse and the Anglican school in Carcross, Rose Dorothy Charlie said, "They took my language. They took it right out of my mouth. I never spoke it again."[300] In some cases, the residential school experience led parents to decide not to teach their children an Aboriginal language. Both of Joline Huskey's parents attended residential school in the Northwest Territories. As a result of their experience in the schools, they raised their daughter to speak English.[301] When Bruce Dumont was sent to residential school in Onion Lake, Saskatchewan, his mother warned him not to speak Cree.[302]

Arranging and blocking marriages

Through the residential schools, Indian Affairs and church officials sought to extend their control into the most intimate aspects of the lives of Aboriginal children. Indian Affairs officials believed that because the department had spent money educating students, it had gained the right to determine whom they married. Government officials feared that if students married someone who had not also been educated at a residential school, they would revert to traditional 'uncivilized' ways.[303] The control of marriage was part of the ongoing policy of forced assimilation. In 1890, Indian Commissioner Hayter Reed criticized Qu'Appelle principal Joseph Hugonnard for allowing female students from the Qu'Appelle school to marry boys who had not gone to school, without first getting Indian Affairs' approval. Reed argued, "The contention that the parents have the sole right to decide such matters cannot for one moment be admitted."[304]

The government not only encouraged marriage between students, but it also began to make marriage part of the process of getting out of residential school. In his annual report for 1896, Deputy Minister Hayter Reed wrote, "It is considered advisable, where pupils are advanced in years and considered capable of providing for themselves, to bring about a matrimonial alliance, either at the time of being discharged from the school or as soon after as possible."[305] In other words, the principals were expected to arrange marriages for the older students.

Principals regularly reported and celebrated student marriages, and, indeed, did often arrange them.[306] Reverend P. Claessen, principal of the Kuper Island school, reported in 1909 that he had succeeded in "engaging one of our leaving girls with one of our best old boys."[307] Kamloops school principal A. M. Carion reported, "It is gratifying to note again that since my last report, two more couples of ex-pupils have been united in the bonds of holy wedlock. The ex-pupils who marry other ex-pupils are better able to retain the habits of civilized life, which they acquired at the school."[308]

Efforts were also made to block marriages deemed to be unsuitable. In 1895, Indian agent Magnus Begg told members of the Blackfoot Reserve that "no young man could marry a girl from an Industrial or board [sic] School without having prepared a house with two rooms, and owning cows, with the necessary stabling, &c."[309] In that same year, principals and Indian agents were instructed to seek departmental permission prior to allowing students to marry.[310]

Principals continued to arrange marriages into the 1930s. In 1936, the principal of the Roman Catholic school at Onion Lake prepared a list of students who had turned sixteen and who, he believed, should not be discharged. He noted that he insisted on keeping the students, since he would "always try to marry them as soon as they leave the school." He wanted to keep one eighteen-year-old student in the school until the fall threshing was complete. Then, she would be married to a former pupil. He wanted to keep another eighteen-year-old until "she gets married during the year."[311] In 1922, the head of the Presbyterian Church's Winnipeg Committee on Indian Work urged the government to make it "unlawfull [sic] for a pupil or ex-pupil of the School to marry or be married without the permission of the Indian Agent." The Presbyterians proposed that the children of such unauthorized marriages be denied Treaty annuities until they reached the age of twenty-one and be prohibited from attending school.[312] Although the measure was not adopted, it is reflective of the church's lack of respect for the autonomy of Aboriginal people.

Food: "Always hungry"

In his memoir of his years as a student at the Mount Elgin school in southern Ontario in the early twentieth century, Enos Montour wrote that the boys "were always hungry. Grub was the beginning and end of all conversations."[313] According to Eleanor Brass, the dinners at the File Hills, Saskatchewan, school consisted "of watery soup with no flavour, and never any meat." One winter, it seemed to her that they ate fish every day.[314] In fair weather, the boys would trap gophers and squirrels, and roast them over open fires to supplement their meagre diets. Sometimes, they would share these treats with the girls at the school.[315] Mary John, who attended the Fraser Lake, British Columbia, school, recalled that the meals were dull and monotonous: a regular diet of porridge interspersed with boiled barley and beans, and bread covered with lard. Weeks might go by without any fish or meat; sugar and jam were reserved for special occasions.[316] A former student of the Hay River school in the Northwest Territories recalled that in the years following the First World War, he "didn't see jam from the time I got off the boat to the time I got back on to come back down."[317] Another student from that school recalled a constant diet of fish: "They would boil it up real good until the meat falls away, the bones and scales all floating around, then mix in flour and serve it up. I won't use flour for my dogs because there's not much good in it."[318]

The reports of government inspectors confirm these student memories. An 1895 report on an inspection of the Middlechurch school concluded, "The 'bill of fare' is plain. I believed it to be barely sufficient for the older pupils, who have now, at fifteen to eighteen years of age, larger apetites [sic] than they will have when older."[319] In 1918, Indian agent John Smith inspected the Kamloops school and reported his "suspicion that the vitality of the children is not sufficiently sustained from a lack of nutritious food, or enough of the same for vigorous growing children."[320] A local doctor concurred, writing that "for some months past the food supplied has been inadequate for the needs of the children."[321] There were some positive assessments, but Indian Affairs official Martin Benson questioned

Ahousaht, British Columbia, students in the school cafeteria. British Columbia Archives, PN [illegible]

their accuracy. "In almost every instance when meals are mentioned by Inspectors they are said to be well cooked. I doubt very much whether they ever took a full regulation school meal of bread and dripping, or boiled beef and potatoes." In Benson's opinion, "The bill of fare is decidedly monotonous and makes no allowance for peculiarities of taste or constitution."[322]

When funding was cut during the Depression of the 1930s, it was the students who paid the price—in more ways than one. At the end of the 1930s, it was discovered that the cook at the Presbyterian school at Kenora was actually selling bread to the students, at the rate of ten cents a loaf. When asked if the children got enough to eat at meals, she responded, "Yes, but they were always hungry." The Indian agent ordered an end to the practice.[323] The fact that hungry students would be reduced to buying bread to supplement their meals in 1939 highlights the government's failure to provide schools with the resources needed to feed students adequately.

Milk was in constant shortage at many schools, in part due to the poor health and small size of the school dairy herds.[324] As late as 1937, disease among the cows at the Kamloops school had cut milk production by 50%. To the principal's frustration, Ottawa refused to fund the construction of an additional barn, which would have allowed for an increase in milk production and the isolation of sick animals.[325] Even when the dairy herds were

Students working in the kitchen at the Cross Lake, Manitoba, school in the early 1920s. St. Boniface Historical Society Archives, Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Keewatin–The Pas fonds, [illegible].

producing satisfactorily, the students did not always get the full benefit. Often, the milk was separated, with the skimmed milk served to the children.[illegible] The milk fat was turned to butter and cream, which was frequently sold to raise funds for the schools. Inspector W. Murison noted in 1923 that the cows at the Elkhorn, Manitoba, school were producing enough milk for the school, but the students were not getting "the full benefit of this milk as I found that they were making about 30 lbs. of butter a week, and a great deal of the milk given the children is separated milk, which has not much food value."[illegible]

In 1942, the federal government issued Canada's Official Food Rules, an early version of the Canada Food Guide.[illegible] Inspectors quickly discovered that residential school diets did not measure up to the Food Rules. Dr. L. B. Pett, the head of the federal government's Nutrition Division, concluded in 1947, on the basis of inspections his staff had done, that "no school was doing a good feeding job."[illegible] It was not until the late 1950s that the federal government adopted a residential school food allowance calculated to provide a diet deemed "fully adequate nutritionally."[illegible] Even with the increase in funding, schools still had difficulty providing students with adequate meals. A 1966 dietician's report on Yukon Hall in Whitehorse observed that although the Canada Food Guide requirements were being met. "Because of the appetite of this age group, the staff are finding 60¢ per day per student is limiting."[illegible] In 1966, an official at Coudert Hall in Whitehorse wrote: "The 60.00 allowed [sic] per student for food is not sufficient. In the north we find prices sky high." To cope with the problem, the residence sometimes had to buy "less meat and served macaroni [sic] products."[illegible] A November 1970 inspection of the Dauphin, Manitoba, school noted that the "menu appears to be short of the recommended two servings of fruit per day."[illegible]

In their home communities, many students had been raised on food that their parents had hunted, fished, or harvested. These meals were very different from the European diets served at the schools. This change in diet added to the students' sense of dislocation. Daisy Diamond found the food at residential school to be unfamiliar and unpalatable. "When I was going to Shingwauk, the food didn't taste very good, because we didn't have our traditional food there, our moose meat, our bannock, and our berries."[illegible] Dora Fraser, from the eastern Arctic, found it difficult to adjust to the food served in the South. "We were eating canned food, beans, peas, red beans. The food was terrible."[illegible] Even when traditional foods were prepared, the school cooks made them in ways that were unfamiliar and unappetizing to the students. Ellen Okimaw, who attended the Fort Albany, Ontario, school, had vivid memories of poorly cooked fish served at the schools. The school cook had simply "dumped the whole thing, and boiled them like that, just like that without cleaning them."[illegible]

Bernard Catcheway recalled that in the 1960s at the Pine Creek, Manitoba, school, "we had to eat all our food even though we didn't like it. There was a lot of times there I seen other students that threw up and they were forced to eat their own, their own vomit."[illegible] Bernard Sutherland recalled students at the Fort Albany school being forced to eat food that they had vomited. "I saw in person how the children eat their vomit. When they happened to be sick. And they threw up while eating."[illegible] These abuses led in 1999 to the conviction of Anna Wesley, a former staff member of the Fort Albany school, on three charges of administering a noxious substance.[illegible]

Some schools did make allowances for traditional foods. Simon Awashish recalled being allowed to trap for food while attending the Amos, Québec, school:

> When we brought in hares, we were asked if … there was some members of our nation that came to work in the kitchen, and we asked them to cook the hare for us in the traditional Atikamekw way, in order to keep some sort of contact with our traditional food that we had before, before we were separated from our community.[illegible]

Students who spoke of hunger also spoke of their efforts to improve their diet secretly. Woodie Elias recalled being hungry all the time at the Anglican school in Aklavik. "Once in a while we go raid the cellar and you can't call that stealing: that was our food."[illegible] When Dorothy Nolie helped out in the Alert Bay school kitchen, she and her co-workers would eat bread as they sliced it. "Kids would come to me and ask me for bread, and I'd sneak it

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Health: "For sickness, conditions at this school are nothing less than criminal."

[illegible]

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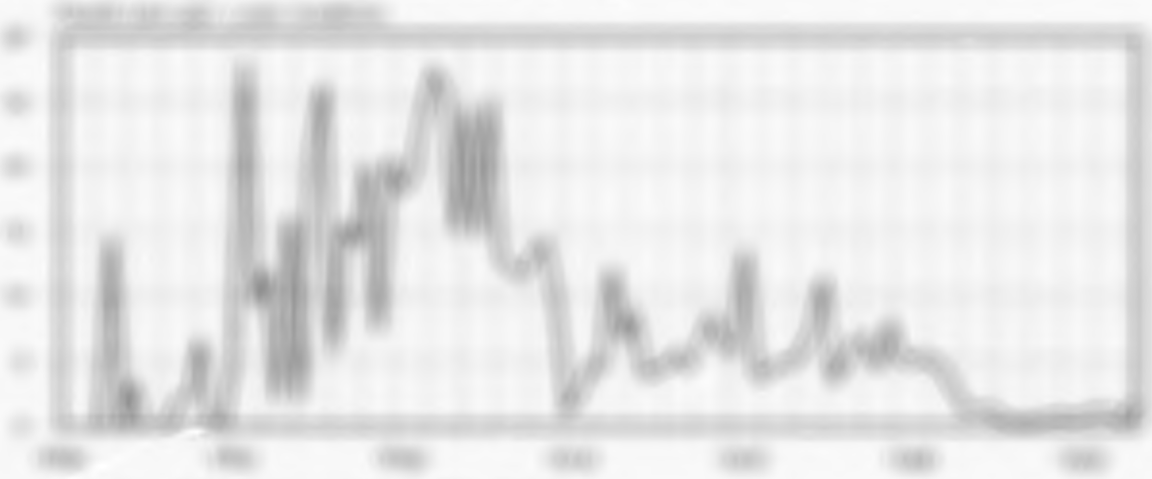
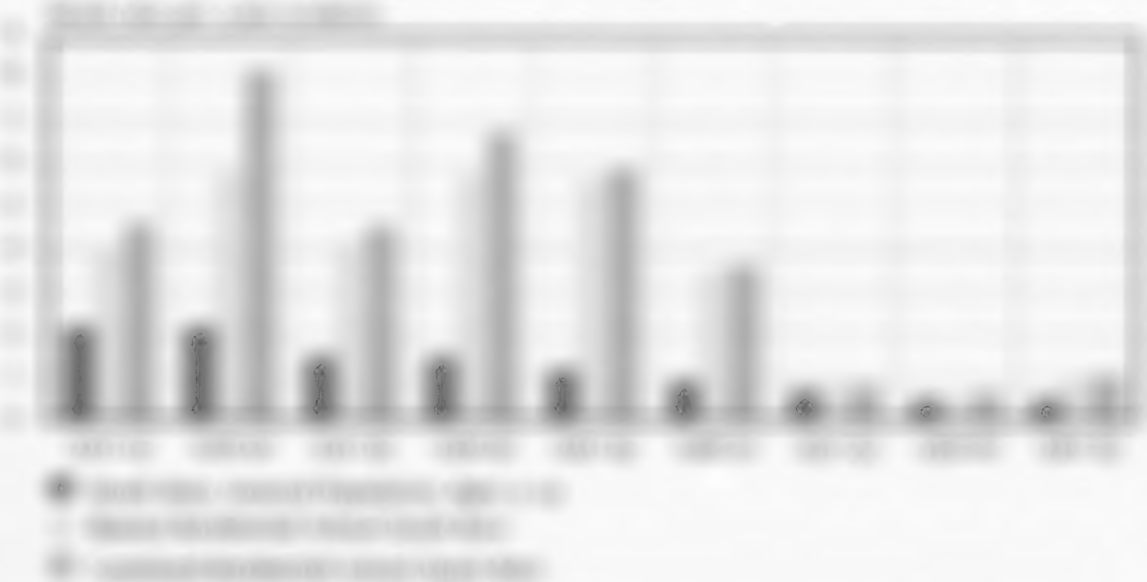
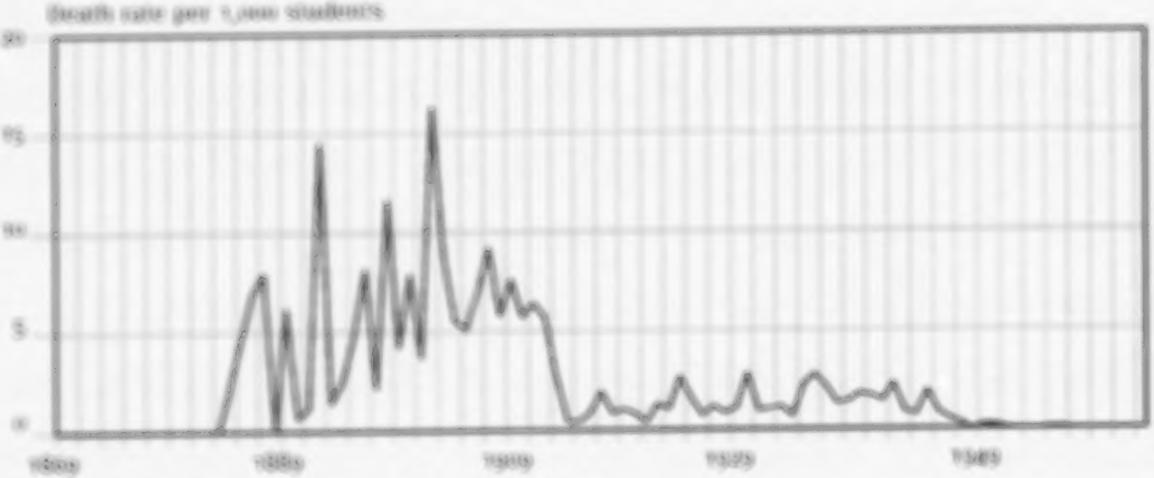




Graph 5

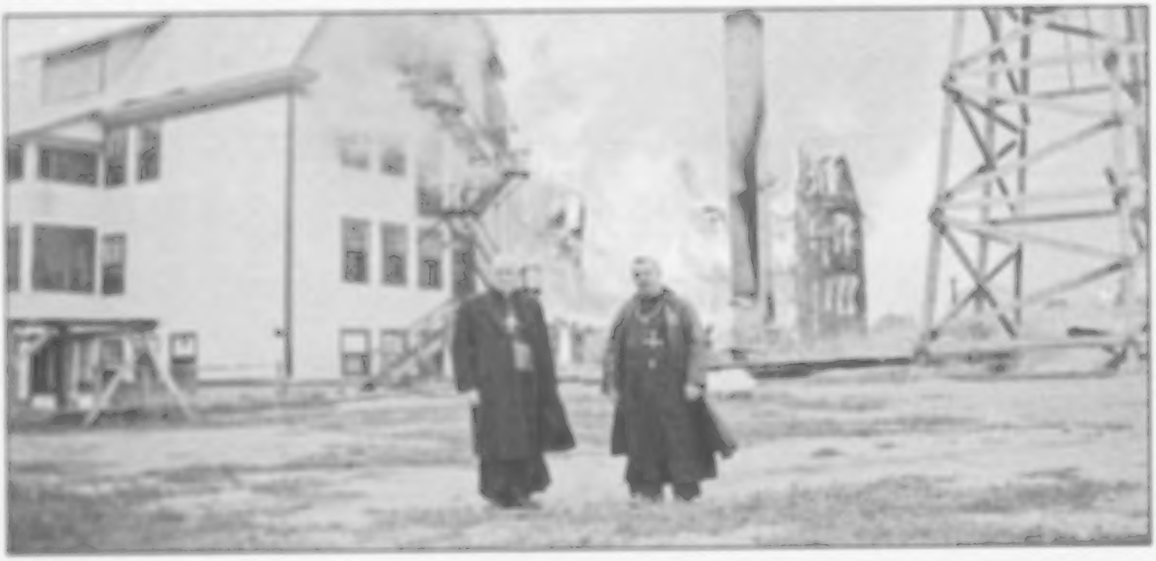
Residential school tuberculosis death rates per 1,000 population, Named and Unnamed registers combined, 1869–1965



Source: Rosenthal, "Statistical Analysis of Deaths," 97–99.

that the sites for the boarding schools on the Prairies seemed "to have been selected without proper regard for either water supply or drainage. I need not mention any school in particular, but I have urged improvement in several cases in regard to fire-protection."[illegible]

Students' health depended on clean water, good sanitation, and adequate ventilation. But little was done to improve the poor living conditions that were identified at the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1940, R. A. Hoey, who had served as the Indian Affairs superintendent of Welfare and Training since 1936, wrote a lengthy assessment of the condition of the existing residential schools. He concluded that many schools were "in a somewhat dilapidated condition" and had "become acute fire hazards." He laid responsibility for the "condition of our schools, generally," upon their "faulty construction." This construction, he said, had failed to meet "the minimum standards in the construction of public buildings, particularly institutions for the education of children."[illegible] By 1940, the government had concluded that future policy should concentrate on the expansion of day schools for First Nations children. As a result, many of the existing residential school buildings were allowed to continue to deteriorate. A 1967 brief from the National Association of Principals and Administrators of Indian Residences—which included principals of both Catholic and Protestant schools—concluded, "In the years that the Churches have been involved in the administration of the schools, there has been a steady deterioration in essential services. Year after year, complaints, demands and requests for improvements have, in the main, fallen upon deaf ears."[illegible]



The Roman Catholic school at Sturgeon Landing, Saskatchewan, was destroyed by fire in September 1952. There was no loss of life. St. Boniface Historical Society Archives, Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Keewatin-The Pas Fonds, N3532.

When E. A. Côté, the deputy minister responsible for Indian Affairs, met with church and school representatives to discuss the brief, he told them that only emergency repairs would be undertaken at schools that Indian Affairs intended to close.[299]

The badly built and poorly maintained schools constituted serious fire hazards. Defective firefighting equipment exacerbated the risk, and schools were fitted with inadequate and dangerous fire escapes. Lack of access to safe fire escapes led to high death tolls in fires at the Beauval and Cross Lake schools.[300] The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada has determined that at least fifty-three schools were destroyed by fire. There were at least 170 additional recorded fires. At least forty students died in residential school fires.[301] The harsh discipline and jail-like nature of life in the schools meant that many students sought to run away. To prevent this, many schools deliberately ignored government instructions in relation to fire drills and fire escapes. These were not problems only of the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. Well into the twentieth century, recommendations for improvements went unheeded, and dangerous and forbidden practices were widespread and entrenched. In the interests of cost containment, the Canadian government placed the lives of students and staff at risk for 130 years.

The buildings were not only fire traps. They were also incubators of disease. Rather than helping combat the tuberculosis crisis in the broader Aboriginal community, the poor condition of the schools served to intensify it. The 1906 annual report of Dr. Peter Bryce, the chief medical officer for Indian Affairs, observed that "the Indian population of Canada has a mortality rate of more than double that of the whole population, and in some provinces more than three times." Tuberculosis was the prevalent cause of death.

Old Sun's, Alberta, dormitory. Diseases such as tuberculosis could spread quickly in crowded dormitories. General Synod Archives, Anglican Church of Canada, P75-103-S7-167.

He described a cycle of disease in which infants and children were infected at home and sent to residential schools, where they infected other children. The children infected in the schools were "sent home when too ill to remain at school, or because of being a danger to the other scholars, and have conveyed the disease to houses previously free."[362] The following year, Bryce published a damning report on the conditions at prairie boarding schools. In an age when fresh air was seen as being central to the successful treatment of tuberculosis, he concluded that, with only a few exceptions, the ventilation at the schools was "extremely inadequate."[363]

He found the school staff and even physicians

> inclined to question or minimize the dangers of infection from scrofulous or consumptive pupils [*scrofula* and *consumption* were alternate names for types of tuberculosis] and nothing less than peremptory instructions as to how to deal with cases of disease existing in the schools will eliminate this ever-present danger of infection.[364]

He gave the principals a questionnaire to complete regarding the health condition of their former students. The responses from fifteen schools revealed that "of a total of 1,537 pupils reported upon nearly 25 per cent are dead, of one school with an absolutely accurate statement, 69 per cent of ex-pupils are dead, and that everywhere the almost invariable cause of death given is tuberculosis." He drew particular attention to the fate of the thirty-one students who had been discharged from the File Hills school: nine were in good health, and twenty-two were dead.[365]

The extent of the health crisis was so severe that some people within the federal government and the Protestant churches became convinced that the only solution was to close the schools and replace them with day schools. However, the Indian Affairs minister of the day, Frank Oliver, refused to enact the plan without the support of the churches involved. The plan foundered for lack of Roman Catholic support. During the same period, Bryce recommended that the federal government take over all the schools and turn them into sanatoria under his control. This plan was rejected because it was viewed as being too costly, and it was thought that it would have met with church opposition.[366]

Dr. Peter Bryce, Indian Affairs chief medical officer, recommended in 1909 that Canada's residential schools be turned into sanatoria and placed under his administration. Library and Archives Canada, Topley Studio, a042966.

Instead of closing schools or turning them into sanatoria, the government's major response to the health crisis was the negotiation in 1910 of a contract between Indian Affairs and the churches. This contract increased the grants to the schools and imposed a set of standards for diet and ventilation. The contract also required that students not be admitted "until, where practicable, a physician has reported that the child is in good health."[367]

As noted earlier, although the contract led to improvements in the short term, inflation quickly eroded the benefit of the increase in grants. The situation was worsened by the cuts to the grants that were repeatedly imposed during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The underfunding created by the cuts guaranteed that students would be poorly fed, clothed, and housed. As a result, children were highly susceptible to tuberculosis. And, because the government was slow to put in place policies that would have prohibited the admission of children with tuberculosis, and ineffective in enforcing such policies once they were developed, healthy children became infected. As late as the 1950s, at some schools, pre-admission medical examinations appear to have been perfunctory, ineffective, or non-existent.[368] In the long run, the 1910 contract proved to be no solution for the tuberculosis crisis.

The schools often lacked adequate facilities for the treatment of sick children. In 1893, Indian Affairs inspector T. P. Wadsworth reported that at the Qu'Appelle school, the "want of an infirmary is still very much felt."[369] Those infirmaries that existed were often primitive. On an 1891 visit to the Battleford school, Indian Commissioner Hayter Reed concluded that the hospital ward was in such poor shape that they had been obliged to move the children in it to the staff sitting room. According to Reed, "The noise, as well as the bad smells, come from the lavatory underneath."[370] Proposals to construct a small hospital at the Red Deer school in 1901 were not implemented.[371] There were also reports of inadequate isolation facilities at the Regina school (1901), the Anglican school in Onion Lake, Saskatchewan (1921), the Mission, British Columbia, school (1924), and the Muncey, Ontario, school (1935).[372] When diphtheria broke out at Duck Lake, Saskatchewan, in 1909, the nine students who fell ill were placed in a "large isolated house."[373]

Even though the 1910 contract required all schools to have hospital accommodation to prevent the spread of infectious disease, many schools continued to be without a proper infirmary. The 1918 global influenza epidemic left four children dead at the Red Deer, Alberta, school. When the influenza epidemic subsided, Principal J. F. Woodsworth complained to Indian Affairs, "For sickness, conditions at this school are nothing less than criminal. We have no isolation ward and no hospital equipment of any kind."[374] The Roman Catholic principals petitioned the federal government for the establishment of sick rooms, under the supervision of a competent nurse, at each school in 1924. At the same time, they objected to the sanitary inspection of the schools by government-appointed nurses, since they recommended changes "leading to the transformation of our schools into hospitals or sanatoriums."[375] There were also regular reports that schools could not afford to hire needed nursing staff.[376] Indian Affairs officials continued to be critical of the quality of care provided by school infirmaries at the end of the 1950s.[377] Complaints from principals make it clear that into the late 1960s, there were still severe limitations on the range of health services being provided to residential school students.[378]

General Aboriginal health care was never a priority for the Canadian government. Tuberculosis among Aboriginal people largely was ignored unless it threatened the general Canadian population.[379] In 1937, Dr. H. W. McGill, the director of Indian Affairs, sent out an instruction that Indian health-care services "must be restricted to those required for the safety of limb, life or essential function." Hospital care was to be limited, spending on drugs was cut in half, and sanatoria and hospital treatment for chronic tuberculosis were eliminated.[380]

The high death rates led many parents to refuse to send their children to residential school. In 1897, Kah-pah-pah-mah-am-wa-ko-we-ko-chin (also known as Tom) was deposed from his position as a headman of the White Bear Reserve in what is now Saskatchewan for his vocal opposition to residential schools. In making his case for a school on the reserve, he pointed to the death rate at the Qu'Appelle industrial school, adding, "Our children are not strong. Many of them are sick most of the time, many of the children sent from this Reserve to the Schools have died.[381]

Death casts a long shadow over many residential school memories. Louise Moine attended the Qu'Appelle school in the early twentieth century. She recalled one year when tuberculosis was "on the rampage in that school. There was a death every month on the girls' side and some of the boys went also."[382] Of his years at the Roman Catholic school in Onion Lake, Joseph Dion recalled, "My schoolmates and I were not long in concluding that the lung sickness was fatal, hence as soon as we saw or heard of someone spitting blood, we immediately branded him for the grave. He had consumption: he had to die."[303] Simon Baker's brother Jim died from spinal meningitis at the Lytton, British Columbia, school. "I used to hear him crying at night. I asked the principal to take him to the hospital. He didn't. After about two weeks, my brother was in so much pain, he was going out of his mind. I pleaded with the principal for days to take him to a doctor."[304]

Ray Silver said that he always blamed the Alberni school for the death of his brother Dalton. "He was a little guy, laying in the bed in the infirmary, dying, and I didn't know 'til he died. You know that's, that was the end of my education."[305] The death of a child often prompted parents to withdraw the rest of their children from a school. One former student said her father came to the school when her sister became ill at the Anglican school at Aklavik, Northwest Territories. "He came upstairs and there we were. He cried over us. He took me home. He put her in a hospital, and she died."[306]

The high deaths rates in the schools were, in part, a reflection of the high death rates among the Aboriginal community in general. Indian Affairs officials often tried to portray these rates as simply the price that Aboriginal people had to pay as part of the process of becoming civilized. In reality, these rates were the price they paid for being colonized.[307] Aboriginal livelihoods were based on access to the land; colonization disrupted that access and introduced new illnesses to North America. Colonial policies helped wiped out food sources and confined Aboriginal people to poorly located reserves, with inadequate sanitation and shelter. The schools could have served as institutions to help counter these problems. To do that, however, they would have had to have been properly constructed, maintained, staffed, and supplied. Government officials were aware of this. They were also aware that death rates among students at residential schools were disproportionately high. It would be wrong to say the government did nothing about this crisis: the 1910 contract did provide a substantial funding increase to the schools. But the federal government never made the type of sustained investment in Aboriginal health, in either the communities or the schools, that could have addressed this crisis—which continues to the present. The non-Aboriginal tuberculosis death rate declined before the introduction of life-saving drugs. It was brought down by improvements in diet, housing, sanitation, and medical attention. Had such measures been taken by the federal government earlier, they would have reduced both the Aboriginal death rates and the residential school students' death rates. By failing to take adequate measures that had been recommended to it, the federal government blighted the health of generations of Aboriginal people.

Burial policy

Many of the early schools were part of larger church mission centres that might include a church, a dwelling for the missionaries, a farm, a sawmill, and a cemetery. The mission cemetery might serve as a place of burial for students who died at school, members of

Residential school students at the Roman Catholic cemetery in Fort George, Québec. Deschâtelets Archives.

the local community, and the missionaries themselves. For example, the cemetery at the Roman Catholic St. Mary's mission, near Mission, British Columbia, was intended originally for priests and nuns from the mission as well as for students from the residential school.[298]

During the influenza pandemic of 1918–19, many of the schools and missions were overwhelmed. At the Fort St. James school and mission in British Columbia, the dead were buried in a common grave.[299] At the Red Deer school, four students who died there were buried two to a grave to save costs.[300] In some cases, student and staff graves were treated differently. At the Spanish, Ontario, school, the graves of staff members were marked with headstones that, in the case of former priests and nuns, provided name and date of birth and death. The burial spots of students were identified only by plain white crosses.[301]

The general Indian Affairs policy was to hold the schools responsible for burial expenses when a student died at school. The school generally determined the location and nature of that burial.[302] Parental requests to have children's bodies returned home for burial were generally refused as being too costly.[303] In her memoirs, Eleanor Brass recalled how the body of one boy, who hung himself at the File Hills school in the early twentieth century, was buried on the Peepeekisis Reserve, even though his parents lived on the Carlyle Reserve.[304] As late as 1958, Indian Affairs refused to return the body of a boy who had died at a hospital in Edmonton to his northern home community in the Yukon.[305]

The reluctance to pay the cost of sending the bodies of children from residential schools home for burial ceremonies continued into the 1960s. Initially, for example, Indian Affairs was initially unwilling to pay to send the body of twelve-year-old Charlie Wenjack back to his parents' home community in Ogoki, Ontario, in 1966.[306] When Charles Hunter drowned in 1974 while attending the Fort Albany school, it was decided, without consultation with his parents, to bury him in Moosonee rather than send him home to Peawanuck near Hudson Bay. It was not until 2011, after significant public efforts made on his behalf by his sister Joyce, who had never got to meet her older brother, that Charles Hunter's body was exhumed and returned to Peawanuck for a community burial. The costs were covered by funds that the *Toronto Star* raised from its readership.[107]

A school closing might mean the cemetery would be left unattended. When the Battleford school closed in 1914, Principal E. Matheson reminded Indian Affairs that there was a school cemetery that contained the bodies of seventy to eighty individuals, most of whom were former students. He worried that unless the government took steps to care for the cemetery, it would be overrun by stray cattle.[108] In short, throughout the system's history, children who died at school were buried in school or mission cemeteries, often in poorly marked graves. The closing of the schools has led, in many cases, to the abandonment of these cemeteries.

Discipline: "Too suggestive of the old system of flogging criminals"

When Indian agent D. L. Clink returned a runaway student to the Red Deer Industrial school in 1895, he noted that the boy's head was bruised from where a teacher had hit him with a stick. The school principal, John Nelson, told Clink that he "had been severe with him before but he would be more severe now." Worried that if he "left the boy he would be abused," Clink took the boy away from the school. He also recommended to Indian Affairs that the teacher who had struck the student be dismissed and brought up on charges, since "his actions in this and other cases would not be tolerated in a white school for a single day in any part of Canada."[109] Clink's report led Indian Affairs Deputy Minister Hayter Reed to direct his staff:

> Instructions should be given, if not already sent, to the Principals of the various schools, that children are not to be whipped by anyone save the Principal, and even when such a course is necessary, great discretion should be used and they should not be struck on the head, or punished so severely that bodily harm might ensue. The practice of corporal punishment is considered unnecessary as a general measure of discipline and should only be resorted to for very grave offences and as a deterrent example.[110]

Reed's instruction underlines a number of the recurrent problems with the Indian Affairs approach to discipline in residential schools. First, Reed, who had previously been the Indian commissioner in western Canada, did not know whether there were regulations dealing with school discipline. Second, his directive is vague: while it indicates

The Mohawk Institute in Brantford, Ontario, was just one of the schools that had specific "punishment rooms." General Synod Archives, Anglican Church of Canada, [illegible]

where students should not be struck, it does not specify where they could be struck, or place limits on what students could be struck with; and neither are there limits on the number of blows. Third, it is not clear that these instructions were ever issued to the principals. If they were, they were soon lost and forgotten. In later years, when conflicts arose over discipline at the schools, Indian Affairs officials made no reference to the policy. In 1920, Canon S. Gould, the general secretary of the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada, asked Deputy Minister Campbell Scott, "Is corporal punishment for disciplinary purposes recognized, or permitted in the Indian Boarding schools?" He noted that whether or not it was permitted, he imagined that it was applied in every residential school in the country.[illegible] The first—and only—evidence of a nation-wide discipline policy for residential schools that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada has been able to locate in the documents reviewed to date was issued in 1953.[illegible]

The failure to establish and enforce a national policy on discipline meant that students were subject to disciplinary measures that would not, as Clink noted in 1895, be tolerated in schools for non-Aboriginal children. Four years after Reed asked his staff to issue instructions on corporal punishment, Indian Commissioner David Laird reported that several children had been "too severely punished" at the Middlechurch school. "Strappings on the bare back," he wrote, was "too suggestive of the old system of flogging criminals."[illegible]

Corporal punishment was often coupled with public humiliation. In December 1896 in British Columbia, the Kuper Island school's acting principal gave two boys "several lashes in the Presence of the Pupils" for sneaking into the girls' dormitory at night.[illegible] When, in 1934, the principal of the Shubenacadie school could not determine who had stolen money and chocolates from a staff member, he had the suspects thrashed with a seven-thonged strap and then placed on bread-and-water diets.[illegible]

Some schools had a specific room set aside to serve as a "punishment room."[illegible] After a 1907 inspection of the Mohawk Institute in Brantford, the Ontario inspector for Indian agencies, J. G. Ramsden, reported, "I cannot say that I was favourably impressed with the sight of two prison cells in the boys [sic] play house. I was informed, however, that these were for pupils who ran away from the Institution, confinement being for a week at a time when pupils returned."[illegible] In 1914, a father successfully sued the Mohawk Institute principal for locking his daughter in a cell for three days on what was described as a "water diet."[illegible]

Boys at the Anglican school in Brocket, Alberta, were chained together as punishment for running away in 1936.[illegible] At the Gleichen, Alberta, school, a principal was accused of shackling a boy to his bed and beating him with a quirt (a riding whip) until his back bled. The principal admitted to having beaten the boy with the whip, but denied breaking the boy's skin.[illegible]

Abusive punishment often prompted children to run away. The father of Duncan Sticks, a boy who died from exposure after running away from the Williams Lake school in British Columbia, told a coroner's inquest in 1902 that, in the past, his son had run away because he had been "beaten with a quirt."[illegible] A boy who ran away from the Anglican school in The Pas, after being severely beaten by the principal, nearly died of exposure.[illegible]

The violent nature of the discipline at the schools came as a shock to students. Isabelle Whitford said that prior to coming to the Sandy Bay school, she had never been physically disciplined. "All my dad have to do was raise his voice, and we knew what he meant. So, when I first got hit by the nuns, it was really devastating 'cause how can they hit me when my parents didn't hit me, you know?"[illegible] Rachel Chakasim said that at the Fort Albany school, "I saw violence for the first time. I would see kids getting hit. Sometimes in the classroom, a yardstick was being used to hit."[illegible]

Fred Brass said that his years at the Roman Catholic school at Kamsack, Saskatchewan, were "the hellish years of my life. You know to be degraded by our so-called educators, to be beat by those people that were supposed to have been there to look after us, to teach us right from wrong, it makes me wonder now today a lot of times I ask that question, who was right and who was wrong?"[illegible] According to Geraldine Bob, the staff members at the Kamloops school she attended were not able to control their tempers once they began to punish a student. "They would just start beating you and lose control and bash you against the wall, throw you on the floor, kick you, punch you."[illegible]

It was a common practice to shave the heads of students who ran away. William Antoine recalled that at the Spanish, Ontario, school, this was done in front of the other students. "They got all the boys to look at what is happening to this boy, what they were doing to him because he ran away. They cut all his hair off and they pulled, pulled his pants down and he was kneeling on the floor, and holding onto the chair.[illegible] [illegible] said that at the Catholic school in The Pas, [illegible] [illegible]

Many students spoke of teachers punishing them for [illegible]

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injured, bewildered, and often friendless or subject to ridicule by other students.[466] Many students thought they were the only children being abused. This confusion made it difficult for them to describe or report their abuse.[467] Some were told they would face eternal damnation for speaking of what had been done to them.[468]

Many students fought back against their far larger and more powerful assailants, especially as they got older and stronger.[469] Some succeeded in forcing their tormentors to leave them alone.[470] Many others, such as Lawrence Waquan, concluded that there was "nothing you can do."[471] Some students ran away from school in an attempt to escape abuse.[472] Others begged their parents not to return them to school after a break.[473]

Some students never reported abuse for fear they would not be believed.[474] Other students who did report abuse were told that they were to blame.[475] In some cases, school officials took immediate action when abuse was reported to them, but the rarity of such actions is itself noteworthy.[476] Former students spoke of how betrayed they felt when nothing was done about their complaints.[477] Many simply felt too ashamed to ever speak of the abuse.[478] Family members often refused to believe their children's reports of abuse, intensifying their sense of isolation and pain.[479] This was especially so within families that had adopted Christianity, and could not believe that the people of God looking after their children would ever do such things.[480]

The impact of abuse was immediate and long-lasting. It destroyed the students' ability to function in the school, and led many to turn to self-destructive behaviours.[481]

Staff abuse of children created conditions for the student abuse of other students. Every school system has to deal with school bullies, student cliques, and inter-student conflict. It is part of the socialization process. Ideally, corrective lessons in how to treat others well are taught, as well as shown by example. Residential school staff had a responsibility not only to model such behaviour, but also to protect students from being victimized. In many cases, they failed to provide that protection. Conflicts between students are not unique to residential schools, but they take on greater significance in a residential school setting where children cannot turn to adult family members for comfort, support, and redress. The moral influences that a child's home community can exert are also absent. Instead, the children were left vulnerable and unprotected. Residential schools failed to live up to their responsibility to protect students from being victimized by other students.

Older or bigger students used force—or the threat of force—to establish their dominance over younger students. In some cases, this dominance was used to coerce younger or smaller students to participate in sexual acts. In other cases, bullies forced vulnerable students to turn over their treats, their food, or their money, or to steal on their behalf. In addition, bullies might simply seek a measure of sadistic satisfaction from beating those who were weaker. Bullies operated individually or in groups. Such groups were often formed initially as a defensive response to the level of violence within the school, but, over time, would take on their own offensive characteristics. Sometimes, such groups not only focused their anger and/or frustration on other students, but also sought to disrupt the general operation of the school. The fact that Catholic and Protestant church leaders continued to disparage one another's religions throughout this period meant that conflicts between students could also take on religious overtones, particularly in communities with more than one residential school, such as Inuvik in the Northwest Territories.

Student victimization of students was an element of the broader abusive and coercive nature of the residential school system. Underfed, poorly housed, and starved for affection, students often formed groups based on age, community of origin, or First Nation. Such groups gave students a measure of identity and status, but also provided protection to their members and dominated more vulnerable students.

William Garson recalled that at the Elkhorn, Manitoba, school, "we were always like hiding in the corners; you know away from any abusement. From other, older, from older, elder boys, students."[602] Percy Thompson said that at the Hobbema school, "one bully used to come at me and he'd pretend he was going to talk to me and all of sudden hit me in the belly. And of course I gag, gag, and he'd laugh his head off and, you know, to see me in such a predicament."[603] Alice Ruperthouse spoke of "the cruelty of the other children" at the Amos, Québec, school. "It was, you know, like in a jungle. Like in a jungle, you don't know what's going to come out but you know you had to watch out."[604] Albert Elias felt that the classroom at the Anglican school in Aklavik "was the safest place to be in 'cause that's where nobody could beat me up. I dreaded recesses and lunches and after school, I dreaded those times."[605]

Bullying might start shortly after arrival. In some schools, all new male students were put through a hazing. Denis Morrison said that each new arrival at the Fort Frances school underwent a beating. "They used to initiate you, like, they would beat the hell out of you, the other kids would. It wasn't anybody else, it was the other kids, the older ones, eh."[606] Bob Baxter recalled that there were student gangs at the Sioux Lookout school. He was beaten up and knifed on one occasion. He had a vivid memory of people tying him to his bed and throwing hot water over him.[607] Clara Quisess said that at the Fort Albany school in Ontario, older girls would threaten the younger ones with knives.[608] Louisa Birote recalled that the girls at the La Tuque, Québec, school all formed themselves into hostile groups. "We hated each other. So, this little gang didn't like the other gang. That's the way at the school, that's what we were taught, fears, and we were scared, and I went to hide in what we called the junk room, the junk closet."[609]

A lack of adequate supervision in the schools and residences meant that such domination could give rise to physical and sexual abuse. The assaults ranged from being forced to kiss someone, to being forced to simulate a sex act, to being raped. In some cases, victims were given small treats to encourage them to be silent; in other cases, they were told they would be killed if they reported the assault.[610] Agnes Moses recalled being molested by older girls at a hostel in northern Canada. "I never quite understood it, and it really wrecked my life, it wrecked my life as a mother, a wife, a woman, and sexuality was a real, it was a dirty word for us."[611] The experience of being abused at a British Columbia school by a group of boys left Don Willie distrustful of most people. "The only, only friends I kept after that were my relatives."[492]

Complaints were infrequent, as students had good reason not to report their abuse. Some feared that bullies would retaliate if they were reported. Others were ashamed of what had been done to them, and some did not fully understand what had been done to them. Many students feared they would not be believed—or would be blamed for somehow bringing the abuse upon themselves. Still others were further punished when they did tell. So, rather than report the abuse, many students chose to fight back; to seek admission into a receptive group, where violence could be fought with violence; or to endure the pain in silence. This victimization left many students feeling intensely betrayed, fearful, isolated, and bereft of home teachings and protection. The betrayal by fellow students has contributed significantly to the schools' long-term legacy of continuing division and distrust within Aboriginal communities. The residential school system's shameful inability to protect students from such victimization, even from among themselves, represents one of its most significant and least-understood failures.

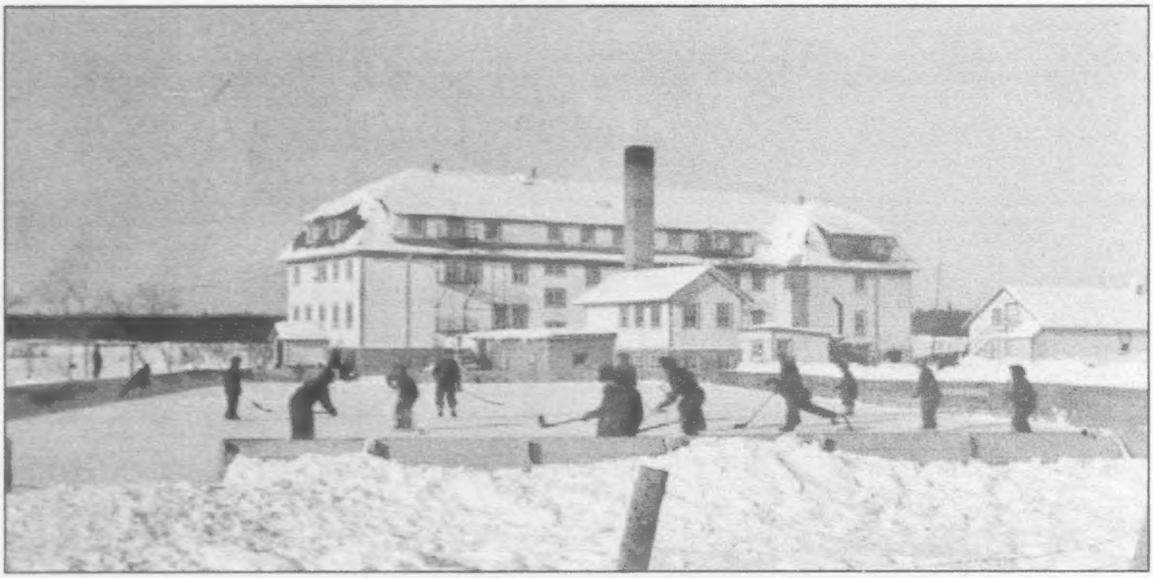
Sports and culture: "It was a relief."

Many students stated that sports helped them make it through residential school. Christina Kimball attended the Roman Catholic school near The Pas, where she experienced physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. She believes that it was only through her involvement with sports that she survived. "I was very sports-oriented. I played baseball. Well, we play baseball, and even hockey. We had a hockey team. That has benefited, benefited me in a way 'cause I loved playing sports. Well, that's one way, too. I don't know how I did it but I was pretty good in sports."[493] Noel Starblanket said that at the Qu'Appelle school, "I had some good moments, in particular in the sports side, 'cause I really enjoyed sports. I was quite athletic, and basically that's what kept me alive, that's what kept me going was the sports."[494] At the Lestock school, Geraldine Shingoose took refuge in extracurricular activities.

> One of the good things that I would do to try and get out of just the abuse was try to, I would join track-meet, try and be, and I was quite athletic in boarding school. And I also joined the band, and I played a trombone. And, and that was something that took me away from the school, and just to, it was a relief.[495]

Paul Andrew spent seven years at Grollier Hall in Inuvik. One of his strongest and most positive memories related to school sports. "There were times when I felt dumb and stupid. But put me in a gym, there was not too many people better than I am."[496]

Recreational activities were always underfunded and undersupplied at the schools. A national survey of Indian Affairs schools (both day and residential) in 1956 concluded:



Boys playing hockey at the McIntosh, Ontario, school. Many students said that they would not have survived their residential school years, were it not for sports. St. Boniface Historical Society, Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Manitoba Province Fonds, SHSB 29362.

> In most of the schools there appeared to be little or no physical education program. A number of schools had no facilities for such activities. Basement areas were obviously designed for playing areas, but they were very inadequate and were utilized for storage or for assembly purposes. A large number of school sites were not properly cleared, graded, and prepared for playing purposes. Many were still in the wild state; others were overgrown with shrubs, thistles, grasses and other weeds presenting a very unkempt and neglected appearance.[497]

Oblate Provincial L. Poupore wrote to Indian Affairs about conditions at the Williams Lake, British Columbia, school in 1957. He pointed out that a year and half earlier, he had informed Indian Affairs about the need for a school gymnasium. At that time, he said, "The boys' play room, a room about 35 by 60, was a scene of bedlam during recreation periods. There were about 150 boys trying to play; the mud they had brought in on their feet had dried and there was so much dust in the room that you could not recognize a boy at the opposite end." Although the department had assured him the construction of a gymnasium would be a priority, nothing had been done, and "the problem of playroom space is worse than ever."[498]

Despite the lack of financial support, hockey teams from a number of schools achieved considerable success in the 1940s and 1950s. Teams from Duck Lake and Qu'Appelle in Saskatchewan, in particular, established enviable records. The Duck Lake school team, the St. Michael's Indians, won the championship of an eight-team league in the Rosthern area in 1946.[499] In 1948, the same team, coached by Father G.-M. Latour, won the northern

Grandin College girls' basketball team, Northwest Territories. One Grandin student wrote in the school newsletter, "At Grandin, Education comes first." Although students could participate in school sports teams, "if you are behind in your school work, you are forced to quit your sports." Deschâtelets Archives.

Saskatchewan midget hockey championship. The following year, it won the provincial championship.[500] According to the *Prince Albert Daily Herald*, "While the Duck Lake boys were outweighed in their midget series they made it up in hockey know-how, skating ability and shooting accuracy. Their drives, from any angle, had the Regina players scared and baffled at the same time."[501] Among the players on the 1949 Duck Lake provincial championship team was Fred Sasakamoose, who went on to become the first status Indian to play in the National Hockey League.[502]

While hockey dominated boys' sports in most residential schools, British Columbia residential schools gained renown for their boxers. In 1947, the Roman Catholic school at Sechelt in North Vancouver advertised for a volunteer to run a school athletics program. Navy veteran Alex Strain took on the job. At the time, the school had no recreation program and no facilities. Under Strain's direction, the students cleared out a storage building and turned it into a gymnasium. Putting in four days of volunteer work a week, Strain created what *Vancouver Sun* reporter Gerry Pratt described as "the smoothest tumbling team in the province." He then established a boxing program at the school. The limits of the first ring were marked out by four rows of chairs. The first punching bag was a navy duffle bag filled with tumbling mats. After two years, Strain purchased a used truck and took the students on a boxing tour of Vancouver Island. After four years in existence, the team had won over 100 trophies. Sister John Lawrence made robes and shorts for each member of the team and also served as trainer.[503] Frederick Baker, the winner of the first national Tom Longboat award, was a member of the Sechelt boxing team. Baker had won

Painter Judith Morgan attended the Alberni, British Columbia, school in the 1940s. Royal British Columbia Museum, Image G-02437.

three championships in 1948, two in 1949, one in 1950, and one in 1951.[504]

Other students sought solace in the arts. A number of former residential school students went on to prominent careers in the visual arts, including Alex Janvier, Jackson Beardy, Judith Morgan, and Norval Morrisseau. Some, such as Beardy, were encouraged in their artistic endeavours by sympathetic staff.[505] Like sports, cultural activities were underfunded. They were also often intended to encourage assimilation. In 1967, the students attending the Shingwauk, Ontario, school put on a four-act play called *Arrow to the Moon*. One act used a dialogue between an Elder and a young man to contrast what were seen as the old and new ways open to Aboriginal people. Billy Diamond played the role of the young man, who concludes at the scene's end, "The new ways show a way to work and live but the old ways have shown us how to die." The performance was filmed and shown to the James Bay Cree, who refrained from making any public comment, but were shocked to discover the degree to which their children were being manipulated.[506]

Albert Canadien recalled in his memoirs from Akaitcho Hall:

> A few of the boys had guitars and there were other instruments in the common room. Sometimes, a few of the boys would get together and play to pass the time. John, the boys' supervisor, noticed this was going on and took an interest, encouraging us to play and sing.
>
> At first we got together just for fun. But eventually ... we formed a band. There were five or six of us, and we call ourselves the Arctic Ramblers. We had guitars, fiddle, bass guitar, drums, and there was even a piano for a while.

They played at dances at the residence and in Hay River.[507] Canadien went on to play in the Chieftones, a rock-and-roll band that toured extensively across North America.[508]

On the rinks, the athletic fields, and parade grounds, or in the arts and handicraft rooms and on performance stages, many students found a way to express themselves, and, through that, gained the opportunity to explore their own talents and sometimes other parts of the country or the world. Most importantly, they gained some confidence in their ability to achieve.

Resistance: "I am the father of this child."

Parents and children developed a variety of strategies to resist residential schooling. Parents might refuse to enrol students, refuse to return runaways, or they might refuse to return students to school at the end of the summer holidays. They also called on the government to increase school funding; to establish day schools in their home communities; and to improve the quality of education, food, and clothing. In taking such measures, they often put themselves at risk of legal reprisals. Almost invariably, the system declined to accept the validity of parental and student criticisms. Parental influences were judged by school and government officials to be negative and backward. The schools also suspected parents of encouraging their children in acts of disobedience.[509] Once parents came to be viewed as the 'enemy,' their criticisms, no matter how valid, could be discounted.

Prior to 1920, when the *Indian Act* was amended to allow Indian Affairs to compel children to attend residential school, the most effective form of resistance that parents could make was to simply refuse to enrol their children. This measure was so effective that it contributed to the closure of a number of residential schools. The Battleford, Saskatchewan, school, which had a capacity of 150 students, had an enrolment of thirty-five in 1915.[510] The school was closed two years later.[511] The High River, Alberta, school could also hold over 100 students, but by 1922, the year it closed, the school had an enrolment of only forty.[512] The Middlechurch, Manitoba, school was not rebuilt after it burned down in 1906, in large measure because it could not recruit enough students.[513] For similar reasons, the St. Boniface, Manitoba, school closed in 1905; the Calgary, Alberta, school closed in 1907; the Regina, Saskatchewan, school closed in 1910; the Elkhorn, Manitoba, school closed in 1919; and the Red Deer, Alberta, school closed in 1919.[514]

By refusing to enrol their children in the industrial schools on the Prairies, parents not only undermined the federal government's assimilation policies, but also deprived the schools of per capita grant revenue and student labour. As a result, the industrial schools ran significant deficits, and overworked and underfed the children they did recruit. This led other parents to withdraw their children from the schools. This was never a risk-free choice for parents. Often, residential schools were the only available schools. Parents who wished to see their children schooled had few, if any, options.[515]

Sometimes, government officials also took reprisals against parents who kept their children out of school, in some cases denying them food rations and Treaty payments.[516] Parents continued to keep their children out of school well into the twentieth century: in 1941, only forty-five students were enrolled in the Fort Providence school, which had an authorized attendance of 100.[517]

In at least one instance, parents home-schooled their children. In 1941, Muriel, Doreen, and Kathleen Steinhauer were kept home from the Edmonton residential school because their parents were not satisfied with the progress they were making at the school. Their

Students at the Kitamaat, British Columbia, school. In 1922, parents refused to return their children to school after the death of one student. The United Church of Canada Archives, [illegible]

mother, Isabel, had been a schoolteacher prior to her marriage, and home-schooled the children.[118]

Sometimes, parents took their children out of school against the wishes of the principal. In 1904, a husband and wife attempted to remove their daughter from the Kuper Island school. When Principal G. Donckele informed them that when they signed the admission form, they had given the government the right to determine when their daughter would be discharged, the father said, "I am the father of this child and I do not care for what you and the government have to say about it." After being told that he could be prosecuted, the father left with his daughter anyway.[119]

In 1913, when a mother removed her daughter from the Fort Resolution school, the Mounted Police were called in and the mother surrendered the girl to the school.[120] In response to the death of a student in 1922, local parents withdrew their children from the Kitamaat, British Columbia, residential school. They agreed to return them only on the condition that the principal "sign her name to a paper before us—that she would see that the children got all the food they wanted, that they would be well cared for, and be supplied with sufficient clothing."[121]

In March 1948, the principal of the Roman Catholic school at Cardston, Alberta, struck a father who was attempting to take his son out of the school. In discussing the issue with Indian Affairs, the Blood Indian Council insisted on having the record note that this was "not the first time that Father Charron had hit an Indian."[122]

It was not uncommon for the parents of an entire community or region to refuse to return their children to school. In the fall of 1926, for example, parents from communities in Manitoba's Interlake region announced they were not sending their children back to the Elkhorn school. According to the parents, the children were not well fed, the older boys compelled the younger boys to steal, and all children were poorly clothed. In October 1927, seventy-five school-aged children from the Blood Reserve in Alberta either had not returned to school or had not been enrolled in school. It took a letter from the police, plus a follow-up visit from the Indian agent, to fill the Anglican and Catholic schools on the reserve. Two weeks after the start of the 1948 school year, fifty-four students had yet to return to the Fraser Lake, British Columbia, school. The police were called in, and by October 2, twenty-five of the students had been returned. This form of parental action was common throughout the 1940s.

Parents were eager to have their children properly educated, and often proposed realistic and effective solutions. In 1905, parents of children attending the Roman Catholic boarding school in Squamish, British Columbia, petitioned to have the school converted into an industrial school. The request was not granted, despite the fact that Indian Affairs officials recognized that the boarding school grant allowed for only "the bare necessities in the line of food and clothing."

Some First Nations leaders who had originally supported residential schools later publicly regretted their decision. Chief Napahkesis of the Pine Creek Band in Manitoba said in 1917 that he was sorry he had ever supported the construction of the Pine Creek school. According to the local Indian agent, the chief felt "the children know less when they come out than they did when they went in." What was needed, the chief said, was a day school. Calls for day schools were, in fact, a common parental request. A 1930 call from parents for a day school at the Cowessess Reserve eventually proved to be successful.

Parents might also demand the dismissal of a principal. In 1917, to back up their call for the resignation of the Shoal Lake school principal, parents refused to return their children to the school. In this case, the principal did resign. The parents of the Kahkewistahaw Band unsuccessfully petitioned the federal government to remove a teacher from the Round Lake, Saskatchewan, school in July 1949. They said that "the children's report cards are very unsatisfactory, worst ever received, and she abuses the children too much." Parents also complained that their children were not learning the skills they needed to survive. Chief Kejick of the Shoal Lake Band told Indian Affairs officials in 1928 that the students from his reserve "did not know how to make a living when they left school and would like trades taught." Eight years later, Charlie Shingoose of the Waywayseecappo Band sought to have his fifteen-year-old son discharged from the Birtle school so he could teach him to "work, trap, etc."

Parents also hired lawyers to press their cases for investigations into the deaths of children who had run away, to complain about the harshness of discipline, to advocate on behalf of children who had been injured working at the schools, and to attempt to have their children discharged from school.[illegible]

One of the most unusual protests was mounted by First Nations people (Dene) in the Northwest Territories, who, in 1937, refused to accept their Treaty payments in protest of conditions at the Fort Resolution school. Their children, they said, were "living in hell."[illegible]

Residential schools also came under criticism from early First Nations organizations. At its meeting in Saddle Lake, Alberta, in 1931, the League of Indians of Canada called for the construction of more day schools to augment residential schools.[illegible] The following year, the League, by then known as the League of Indians of Western Canada, called for the closure of boarding schools.[illegible] The League also recommended that only qualified teachers be hired to work at residential schools, that medical examinations be given to students before they were sent to the schools, and that the half-day system be changed to allow for greater class time.[illegible]

In an effort to bring their own residential schooling to an end, some students attempted to burn their schools down. There were at least thirty-seven such attempts, two of which resulted in student and staff deaths.[illegible] For students, the most effective form of resistance was to run away. The principal of the Shingwauk Home in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, school in the 1870s, E. F. Wilson, devoted a chapter of his memoirs to the topic of "Runaway Boys." It included the story of three boys who tried to make their way home by boat. They were found after more than ten days later, stranded on an island in the North Channel of Lake Huron.[illegible]

After 1894, children enrolled in a residential school (or who had been placed there by government order because it was felt that they were not being properly cared for by their parents) but who were refusing to show up at school were considered to be "truants." Under the Indian Act and its regulations, they could be returned to the school against their will. Children who ran away from residential schools were also considered to be truants. Parents who supported their children in their truancy were often threatened with prosecution.[illegible]

Most runaway students headed for their home communities. Students knew they might be caught, returned, and punished. Still, they believed the effort to make it home and have a measure of freedom was worth it. In some cases, in fact, the schools failed to force runaways to return.[illegible] Some students eluded capture. Instead of heading home, some went to work for local farmers and, as a result, were able to avoid their pursuers for considerable periods of time.[illegible]

Running away could be risky. At least thirty-three students died, usually due to exposure, after running away from school.[illegible] In a significant number of cases, parents and Indian Affairs officials concluded that the deaths could have been prevented if school officials had mounted earlier and more effective searches and notified police officials and family members.[illegible] In the case of Charles and Tom [illegible], two brothers who ran away from the [illegible] school on October [illegible], [illegible], school officials waited until November before

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Staff members were often motivated by a spirit of adventure as well as a religious commitment. As a young seminary student in Corsica, a French island in the Mediterranean, Nicolas Coccola wanted more than a life as a priest. In his memoir, he wrote, "The desire of foreign missions with the hope of martyrdom appeared to me as a higher calling." He ended up living out his life as a residential school principal in British Columbia. As a small boy in England in the middle of the nineteenth century, Gibbon Stocken read with enthusiasm the missionary literature sent to him by an aunt. When he turned seventeen, he volunteered his services to the Anglican Church Missionary Society. He hoped to be sent to India. Instead, he was offered a position on the Blackfoot Reserve in what is now southern Alberta. British-born nurse and midwife Margaret Butcher managed to get to India, where she worked for a British family. From there, she made her way to British Columbia, where she worked with a Methodist mission to Japanese immigrants. In 1916, she was on her way to a job at the Methodist residential school in Kitamaat, British Columbia.

This mix of motivations continued throughout the system's history. Lorraine Arbez, who worked at the Qu'Appelle school in the 1950s, said, "I chose this career to work with the children and my aim was to do something good with them and I hope I was of some use." For Noreen Fischbuch, who worked at schools in Ontario and Alberta in the 1950s and 1960s, the residential schools offered much-needed experience: "As far as I was concerned, it was a teaching job, it was with the kids and I liked the kids.… The kids were getting an education; I had a job." George Takashima, who taught at Stone Lookout, explained, "I was just sort of adventuresome, you might say."

Almost all the staff members were poorly paid. Government officials took the position that because many of the staff members belonged to missionary organizations, pay was a "minor consideration." As a result, the schools had problems recruiting and keeping staff. Alexander Sutherland of the Methodist Church was particularly outspoken about the link between low wages and the difficulties the schools had in recruiting staff. In 1887, he wrote to the minister of Indian Affairs about the "difficulty of obtaining efficient and properly qualified teachers, on account of the meagre salaries paid." The issue of low pay never went away. More than half a century later, in 1936, C. H. Birdsall, the chair of the United Church committee responsible for the Edmonton school, complained that it "is impossible for the Residential School to offer salaries in competition with" rates that Indian Affairs was paying teachers at day schools. Given the inadequate quality of accommodation, equipment, and staff at the school, he felt that it was "doubtful the present work with Indian Children could properly be called education." Many of the Catholic schools survived on what amounted to volunteer labour. In 1938, Sechelt principal H. F. Dunlop informed Ottawa, "If this school kept out of the red during the past year it was largely due to the fact that four Oblates, working here full time, received in salaries from Jan 1937 to Jan 1938 the grand total of $3000." As late as 1948, the nuns at the Christie Island school were being paid $10 a month—a fact that made Principal A. Noonan "feel like a heel."

The chief cook at Lapointe Hall in Fort Simpson, Northwest Territories. The schools were highly dependent on female labour. Northwest Territories Archives, N-[illegible].

Many qualified and experienced people worked in the schools. Miss Asson, the matron at the Kitamaat school in 1936, was a graduate of the Ensworth Deaconess Hospital in St. Joseph, Missouri. She had also trained as a deaconess in Toronto, and worked in China from 1909 to 1927.[illegible] The matron at the Anglican Wabasca, Alberta, school in 1933 was a nurse.[illegible] Among the staff at the Norway House school in the early twentieth century were the sisters Charlotte Amelia and Lilian Yeomans. Charlotte had trained as a nurse, and Lilian was one of the first women in Canada to qualify as a doctor.[illegible] Theresa Reid had four years of teaching experience and a teaching certificate before she applied to work at Norway House.[illegible] George Takashima had a teaching certificate,[illegible] and Olive Saunders had a university degree and several years of teaching experience.[illegible] In 1966, E. O. Drouin, the principal of the Roman Catholic school in Cardston, boasted that out of the twenty-one people on his staff, ten had university degrees. Drouin, himself, had left his position as a university professor to go to work at the school.[illegible]

A number of people devoted their adult lives to working in residential schools. At least twelve principals died in office.[illegible] Kuper Island principal George Donckele resigned in January 1907; by June of that year, he was dead.[illegible] Sherman Shepherd served at the Anglican schools in Shingle Point on the Arctic Ocean in the Yukon, Aklavik (Northwest Territories), Fort George (Québec), and Moose Factory (Ontario), resigning in 1954 after twenty-five years of service in northern Canada.[illegible] Others worked into their old age, since, due to low pay, their savings were also low and pensions were minimal. When the seventy-three-year-old matron of the Ahousaht school in British Columbia retired in 1929, Principal W. M. Wood recommended that she be given an honorarium of a month's salary as appreciation for her years of service. Woods noted that she was "retiring with very limited means."[illegible]

Such long service was not the norm. Because the pay was often low and the working and living conditions were difficult, turnover was high throughout the system's history. From 1882 to 1898, there was what amounted to an annual full turnover of teachers at the Fort Simpson (now Port Simpson), British Columbia, school. At one point, all the teaching was being done by the local Methodist missionary Thomas Crosby, his wife, Emma, and the school matron.[405] Between January 1958 and March 1960, a period of just over two years, the Alert Bay school lost fifty-eight staff members. Of these, nineteen had been fired because they were deemed to be incompetent. Eight others left because they were angry with the principal.[406] In 1958, the Benedictine Sisters announced that their order would no longer be providing the Christie, British Columbia, school with staff from its monastery in Mount Angel, Oregon. According to the prioress of the Benedictine monastery, Mother Mary Gemma, meeting residential school needs had left the members of the order physically and mentally exhausted. "One of my youngest teachers had to have shock treatments this year and two others may have to." In the previous two and a half years, the order had lost fourteen teachers.[407] These examples are confirmed by the overall statistics. The average annual turnover rate for all Indian Affairs schools from 1956–57 to 1963–64 was 25%.[408]

The schools were heavily dependent on female labour. The Roman Catholics relied on female religious orders to staff and operate the residential schools.[409] The Protestants were equally reliant upon the underpaid work of female staff. Austin McKitrick, the principal of the Presbyterian school at Shoal Lake in northwestern Ontario, acknowledged this when he wrote in 1901, "I think if we men were to put ourselves in the places of some overworked, tired-out women, we would perhaps not stand it so patiently as they often do."[410] One missionary wrote that, knowing what he did about what was expected of female missionaries, he would discourage any daughter of his from working for the Methodist Women's Missionary Society.[411]

Although women usually worked in subordinate roles, the 1906 Indian Affairs annual report listed eleven female principals. All worked at boarding schools, as opposed to industrial schools. Seven of them were Roman Catholic, two were Anglican, one was Methodist, and one was Presbyterian.[412] One of these principals was Kate Gillespie. After teaching at day schools on reserves near Kamsack and Prince Albert, she was appointed principal of the File Hills school in 1901, a position she held until her marriage in 1908.[413]

The schools employed many more people than principals and teachers. Most schools were mini-communities. There were cooks, seamstresses, housekeepers, matrons, disciplinarians, farmers, carpenters, blacksmiths, engineers (to operate the heating and electrical generators), shoemakers, and even bandmasters.[414] Smaller schools such as the United Church Crosby Girls' Home in Port Simpson, British Columbia, made do with a staff of only three people in 1935.[415] The Roman Catholic school at Kamloops, British Columbia, had at least nineteen staff in that same year.[416] The Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, residence had over fifty employees during the 1966–67 school year.[417]

Workloads were heavy, and time off was rare. The seven-day week was the norm for many employees. An 1886 report on the Mount Elgin school noted, "No holidays are given or allowed to the staff; all days or parts of days lost time are deducted from their wages."[418] The policy at the Anglican schools into the 1920s was to allow "one full day off duty each month."[419] Indian agent F. J. C. Ball predicted that a sixty-three-year-old employee of the

Lytton school was headed for a nervous breakdown in 1922. According to Ball, the man was "acting as teacher, minister, janitor and general handy man around the School. He also has charge of the boys [sic] dormitory at night."[620]

Staff meals were generally superior to those provided to the students. Staff members, particularly in the early years of the system, had greater immunity than their students to many of the diseases that plagued residential schools. Despite this, the living conditions that prevailed in many schools took a toll on staff. In 1896, E. B. Glass, the principal of the Whitefish Lake school in what is now Alberta, said the deterioration in the health of one staff member was the result of having to work in an inadequately heated and poorly insulated schoolhouse in which the "cold wind whistled up through the floor." Glass said that "the Department which charges itself with building, repairing and furnishing school houses, should also charge itself with neglect and the suffering endured by the teacher from that neglect."[621]

Disease and illness also claimed the children of married staff members. Emma Crosby, who helped found the Crosby Girls' Home in Port Simpson in the late 1870s, buried four of her children at Port Simpson. Two of them had succumbed to diphtheria.[622] Elizabeth Matheson, the wife of the Onion Lake principal, lost a daughter to whooping cough and a son to meningeal croup in the early years of the twentieth century.[623] During her fourth pregnancy, Elizabeth Matheson was so depressed that she considered suicide.[624]

Missionary staff, particularly in the early years of the system, were extremely hostile to Aboriginal culture.[625] They commonly described Aboriginal people as "lazy."[626] The long-time principal of the Shubenacadie school in Nova Scotia, J. P. Mackey, was expressing these views in the 1930s. In one letter, he described Aboriginal people as natural liars. "For myself, I never hope to catch up with the Indian and his lies, and in fact I am not going to try."[627] Others, however, spoke out on behalf of Aboriginal people. Hugh McKay, the superintendent of Presbyterian missionary work among Aboriginal people, criticized the federal government for failing to implement its Treaty promises and for failing to alleviate the hunger crisis on the Prairies.[628] Similarly, William Duncan, the Anglican missionary at Metlakatla, British Columbia, advised the Tsimshian on how to advance arguments in favour of Aboriginal title.[629]

Sometimes, staff protested the way students were treated. When two staff members of the Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, school resigned in 1952, they complained of the harsh disciplinary regime at the school.[630] In 1957, Helen Clafton, an ex-dormitory supervisor, wrote of how, at the Lytton, British Columbia, school, "the 'strap' is altogether too much in evidence."[631]

Aboriginal people also worked for the schools. The Mohawk Institute hired former student Isaac Barefoot to work as a teacher in 1869. Barefoot went on to serve as acting principal and was later ordained as an Anglican minister.[632] Another former student, Susan Hardie, obtained her teaching certificate in 1886.[633] She was the school governess as early as 1894, and was paid $200 a year.[634] She retired at the beginning of the 1936–37

Miss Cornelius, an Oneida woman, taught at the Regina, Saskatchewan, school in the early twentieth century. Saskatchewan Archives Board, R-B992.

school year.[635] A young Oneida woman, Miss Cornelius, taught at the Regina school in the early twentieth century.[636] She left the following year, lured away to a better paying school in the United States.[637] In the early 1930s, the Brandon school hired former student Lulu Ironstar as a teacher.[638] But these were exceptions, not the rule. As late as 1960, there were only twenty-three First Nations teachers working in residential schools across the country. Nineteen taught academic subjects and the other four taught home economics and industrial arts.[639] Stan McKay, who was educated at the Birtle and Brandon residential schools, taught in the Norway House, Manitoba, school in the 1960s. Although there was much that he enjoyed about the work, he left after two years. In his opinion, the education he was being forced to provide was not relevant to the lives of the children. There was, for example, a heavy emphasis on English, and no recognition of the role of Cree in the communities from which the children came. "They were doomed to fail under the system that existed. The majority of them would certainly and did."[640]

Verna Kirkness, who was raised on the Fisher River First Nation in Manitoba, taught at both the Birtle and Norway House schools.[641] She did not like the atmosphere at the Birtle school, where, she felt, administrators discouraged students from spending additional time with her. In her memoir, she wrote that she "wondered if they were afraid the children would tell me things about their lives away from the classroom."[642]

It was in the 1960s that a number of Aboriginal people were promoted to the position of school principal. Ahab Spence, a former residential school student, was appointed principal of the Sioux Lookout school in 1963.[643] Under Spence's administration, the school had a staff of twenty-three, half of whom were Aboriginal.[644] Colin Wasacase became the principal of the Presbyterian school in Kenora in 1966.[645] In keeping with past practice, his wife was made school matron.[646] This trend continued into the 1970s, when Aboriginal people were appointed to administrative positions at numerous residential schools, including those in Mission and Kamloops, British Columbia; Blue Quills, Alberta; Prince Albert, Duck Lake, and Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan; and Fort George, Québec.[647] Although the total number of schools declined rapidly from 1969 onwards, they became a significant source of Aboriginal employment, particularly in Saskatchewan, where six schools were operated by First Nations educational authorities. Of the 360 people working in the Saskatchewan schools in 1994, 220 were of Aboriginal ancestry—almost two-thirds of the total.[648]

Most of the Aboriginal people who were hired by the schools worked as cooks, cleaners, and handymen. In 1954, Mrs. Clair, a Cree woman who had attended the school at Lac La Ronge, Saskatchewan, was working at the Carcross school in the Yukon. She was described by a superintendent as a "very fine person, willing worker and everyone likes her. Can certainly get the most out of the children."[649] At the Wabasca, Alberta, school, Alphonse Alook was seen as being "a tower of strength to the Principal especially of late. Can do fair carpentering and is loyal to the school. Principal recommends an increase in his salary."[650] Four young Aboriginal women, three of whom were sisters, had been hired to work at the Fort George, Québec, school in 1953.[651] A 1956 report on three of them said, "The Herodier girls are all doing a fine job." They were not, however, being housed in the same way as non-Aboriginal staff. The report observed that it was fortunate that "the native girls do not mind doubling up in cramped quarters otherwise staff accommodation would be insufficient."[652]

A number of former Aboriginal staff members felt they helped make an important difference in the lives of the students. Jeanne Rioux went to the Edmonton school and later worked as a supervisor at the Hobbema school in Alberta. There, she challenged staff about the way they disciplined children.[653] Mary Chapman was a former residential school student who later worked in the kitchen of the Kuper Island school. At her prompting, the school began serving students and staff the same meals. It was her rule that "if we run out of roast, the kids run out of roast, I don't give them bologna, I take the roast from the staff and I give it to them."[654] Vitaline Elsie Jenner, who had unhappily attended the Fort Chipewyan, Alberta, residential school, worked as a girls' supervisor at Breynat Hall, the Roman Catholic residence at Fort Smith, Northwest Territories. To her surprise, she enjoyed most of the experience. She recalled being asked by one staff person what sort of games she thought the children would like to play to make them feel at home. "I said, 'You know I bet you they all want to be hugged, like I was in that residential school. 'Cause you know what? They're away from their parents.'"[655]

Former staff and the children of former staff members have expressed the view that much of the discussion of the history of residential schools has overlooked both the positive intent with which many staff members approached their work, and the positive accomplishments of the school system. Although they certainly believed the system was underfunded, they also believed that they and their parents devoted much of their lives to educating and caring for Aboriginal children.

Most of the staff members did not make a career in residential schools, spending only a year or two at a school before moving on. Others stayed for many years in conditions that were often very different from what they grew up with, working for low pay, and living in cramped and confined quarters with, at times, less than congenial colleagues. They spent their time teaching, cooking, cleaning, farming, and supervising children. On their own, these can be seen as positive, not negative, activities. For the most part, the school staff members were not responsible for the policies that separated children from their parents and lodged them in inadequate and underfunded facilities. In fact, many staff members spent much of their time and energy attempting to humanize a harsh and often destructive system. Along with the children's own resilience, such staff members share credit for any positive results of the schools.

Agreement and apologies

During the years in which the federal government was slowly closing the residential school system, Aboriginal people across the country were establishing effective regional and national organizations. In the courts and the legislatures, they argued for the recognition of Aboriginal rights, particularly the right to self-government. They forced the government to withdraw its 1969 White Paper that aimed at terminating Aboriginal rights, they placed the settling of land claims on the national agenda, ensured that Aboriginal rights were entrenched in the Constitution, and saw the creation of a new jurisdiction within Canada—the territory of Nunavut—with an Inuit majority population. These developments were part of a global movement asserting the rights of Indigenous peoples. Canadian Aboriginal leaders played a key role in this movement. For example, they were central in the creation of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples in 1975.[656] The work of the council laid the groundwork for the 2007 *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.[657]

From the 1960s onwards, many people within the churches began to re-evaluate both the broader history of the relations between the churches and Aboriginal peoples, and the specific history of the residential schools. Many church organizations provided support to Aboriginal campaigns on such issues as land and Treaty rights. In the 1980s, the churches began to issue apologies to Aboriginal people. One of the first of these, issued in 1986 by the United Church of Canada, focused on the destructive impact that church missionary work had on Aboriginal culture.[658] The Oblate order offered an apology in 1991 that referred to the residential schools.[659] Apologies relating specifically to their roles in operating residential schools were issued by the Anglicans in 1993, the Presbyterians in 1994, and the United Church in 1998.[660]

Aboriginal people also began both individually and collectively to push for the prosecution of individuals who had abused students at residential schools and for compensation for former students. In 1987, Nora Bernard, a former student of the Shubenacadie residential school, began interviewing fellow Survivors in the kitchen of her home in Truro, Nova Scotia.[661] In 1995, she formed the Shubenacadie Indian Residential School Survivors Association and started registering Survivors. The work of former students from the schools in places as distant as Fort Albany, Ontario; Chesterfield Inlet, then in the Northwest Territories; and Williams Lake, British Columbia, led to several police investigations, and a limited number of prosecutions and convictions. They also led to the creation of local and national organizations of former residential school students. Phil Fontaine, then Grand Chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, placed the issue on the national agenda in October 1990 when he spoke publicly about the abuse that he and his fellow students had experienced at the Fort Alexander school.[illegible]

Former students also filed lawsuits against the federal government and the churches over the treatment that they received in the schools. Although they were successful in a number of these cases, courts were not willing to provide compensation for some issues of importance to Aboriginal peoples, such as the loss of language and culture. By October 2001, more than 8,500 residential school Survivors had filed lawsuits against the federal government, the churches, related organizations, and, where possible, the individual who committed the abuse.[illegible] By 2005, it was estimated that the volume surpassed 18,000 lawsuits.[illegible] Former students also commenced class-action lawsuits for compensation. Although lower courts rejected their right to pursue such claims, in 2004, the Ontario Court of Appeal ruled that one of these cases (known as the "Cloud case") should be allowed to proceed.[illegible] Within months, the federal government agreed to enter into a process intended to negotiate a settlement to the growing number of class-action suits. The Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) was reached in 2006 and approved by the courts in the following year. The IRSSA has five main components: 1) a Common Experience Payment; 2) an Independent Assessment Process; 3) support for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation; 4) support for residential school commemoration; and 5) the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Through the Common Experience Payment, former students would receive a payment of $10,000 for the first year that they attended a residential school, and an additional $3,000 for each additional year or partial year of attendance. The Independent Assessment Process adjudicated and compensated the claims of those students who were physically or sexually abused at the schools. Funding was also provided to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation to support initiatives addressing the residential school legacy. The Settlement Agreement committed the federal government to funding initiatives to commemorate the residential school experience. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was mandated to tell Canadians about the history of residential schools and the impact those schools had on Aboriginal peoples, and to guide a process of reconciliation.

The court approval of the IRSSA in 2007 was followed in June 2008 with Prime Minister Stephen Harper's apology on behalf of Canada. In his statement, the prime minister recognized that the primary purpose of the schools had been to remove children from their homes and families in order to assimilate them better into the dominant culture. Harper said, "These objectives were based on the assumption Aboriginal cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior and unequal. Indeed, some sought, as it was infamously said, 'to kill the Indian in the child.' Today, we recognize that this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country."[166]

The prime minister was joined by the leaders of the other parties represented in the Canadian House of Commons. The Liberal leader of the opposition, the Honourable Stéphane Dion, recognized that the government's policy had "destroyed the fabric of family in First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities. Parents and children were made to feel worthless. Parents and grandparents were given no choice. Their children were stolen from them."[167] The Bloc Québecois leader, the Honourable Gilles Duceppe, asked Canadians to "picture a small village, a small community. Now picture all of its children, gone. No more children between seven and sixteen playing in the lanes or the woods, filling the hearts of their elders with their laughter and joy."[168] The New Democratic Party leader, the Honourable Jack Layton, called on Canadians to help

> reverse the horrific and shameful statistics afflicting Aboriginal populations, now: the high rates of poverty, suicide, the poor or lacking no education, overcrowding, crumbling housing, and unsafe drinking water. Let us make sure that all survivors of the residential schools receive the recognition and compensation that is due to them.[169]

In his response, Phil Fontaine, then National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, said the apology marked a new dawn in the relationship between Aboriginal people and the rest of Canada. He also called attention to the "brave survivors," who, by "the telling of their painful stories, have stripped white supremacy of its authority and legitimacy. The irresistibility of speaking truth to power is real."[170] National Chief of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples Patrick Brazeau spoke of how the resiliency, courage, and strength of residential school Survivors had inspired all Aboriginal people.[171] Mary Simon, President of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, said, in tackling the hard work that remained to be done, "Let us now join forces with the common goal of working together to ensure that this apology opens the door to a new chapter in our lives as aboriginal peoples and in our place in Canada."[172] Clem Chartier, President of the Métis National Council, noted that he had attended a residential school, and pointed out that many issues regarding the relationship between Métis people and residential schools still were not resolved. He said, "I also feel deeply conflicted, because there is still misunderstanding about the situation of the Métis Nation, our history and our contemporary situation."[173] Beverley Jacobs, President of the Native Women's Association of Canada, spoke of how Aboriginal communities were recovering their traditions. "Now we have our language still, we have our ceremonies, we have our elders, and we have to revitalize those ceremonies and the respect for our people not only within Canadian society but even within our own peoples."[174]

The Settlement Agreement and the formal apology by Prime Minister Stephen Harper represent the culmination of years of political struggle, changes in societal attitudes, court decisions, and negotiation. Through it all, the Survivors kept the issue alive.

Canada's Aboriginal leaders along with a number of former residential schools students were present on the floor of the House of Commons when Prime Minister Stephen Harper delivered his 2008 apology. Clockwise from the left: former student Don Favel; former student Mary Moonias; former student Mike Cachagee, President of the National Residential School Survivors Society; former student Crystal Merasty; former student Piita Irniq; Patrick Brazeau, National Chief of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples; Mary Simon, President of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami; Phil Fontaine, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations; Beverley Jacobs, President of the Native Women's Association of Canada; Clem Chartier, President of the Métis National Council. Former student Marguerite Wabano is obscured by Phil Fontaine's headdress. Canadian Press: Fred Chartrand.

These events do not bring the residential school story to an end. The legacy of the schools remains. One can see the impact of a system that disrupted families in the high number of Aboriginal children who have been removed from their families by child-welfare agencies. An educational system that degraded Aboriginal culture and subjected students to humiliating discipline must bear a portion of responsibility for the current gap between the educational success of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians. The health of generations of Aboriginal children was undermined by inadequate diets, poor sanitation, overcrowded conditions, and a failure to address the tuberculosis crisis that was ravaging the country's Aboriginal community. There should be little wonder that Aboriginal health status remains far below that of the general population. The over-incarceration and over-victimization of Aboriginal people also have links to a system that subjected Aboriginal children to punitive discipline and exposed them to physical and sexual abuse.

The history of residential schools presented in this report commenced by placing the schools in the broader history of the global European colonization of Indigenous peoples and their lands. Residential schooling was only a part of the colonization of Aboriginal people. The policy of colonization suppressed Aboriginal culture and languages, disrupted Aboriginal government, destroyed Aboriginal economies, and confined Aboriginal people to marginal and often unproductive land. When that policy resulted in hunger, disease, and poverty, the federal government failed to meet its obligations to Aboriginal people. That policy was dedicated to eliminating Aboriginal peoples as distinct political and cultural entities and must be described for what it was: a policy of cultural genocide.

Despite being subjected to aggressive assimilation policies for nearly 200 years, Aboriginal people have maintained their identity and their communities. They continue to assert their rights to self-governance. In this, they are not alone. Like the Settlement Agreement in Canada, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* is a milestone in a global campaign to recognize and respect the rights of Indigenous peoples. It is time to abandon the colonial policies of the past, to address the legacy of the schools, and to engage in a process of reconciliation with the Aboriginal people of Canada.

The legacy

The closing of the schools did not bring the residential school story to an end. Their legacy continues to this day. It is reflected in the significant disparities in the education, income, and health between Aboriginal people and other Canadians—disparities that condemn many Aboriginal people to shorter, poorer, and more troubled lives. The legacy is also reflected in the intense racism and the systemic discrimination Aboriginal people regularly experience in this country. More than a century of cultural genocide has left most Aboriginal languages on the verge of extinction. The disproportionate apprehension of Aboriginal children by child-welfare agencies and the disproportionate imprisonment and victimization of Aboriginal people are all part of the legacy of the way that Aboriginal children were treated in residential schools.

Many students were permanently damaged by residential schools. Separated from their parents, they grew up knowing neither respect nor affection. A school system that mocked and suppressed their families' cultures and traditions destroyed their sense of self-worth and attachment to their own families. Poorly trained teachers working with an irrelevant curriculum left them feeling branded as failures. Children who had been bullied and physically or sexually abused carried a burden of shame and anger for the rest of their lives. Overwhelmed by this legacy, many succumbed to despair and depression. Countless lives were lost to alcohol and drugs. Families were destroyed, and generations of children have been lost to child welfare.

The Survivors are not the only ones whose lives have been disrupted and scarred by the residential schools. The legacy has also profoundly affected the Survivors' partners, their children, their grandchildren, their extended families, and their communities. Children who were abused in the schools sometimes went on to abuse others. Many students developed addictions as a means of coping. Students who were treated and punished like prisoners in the schools sometimes graduated to real prisons.

The Commission recognizes that these impacts cannot be attributed solely to residential schooling, but they are clearly attributable to the Aboriginal policies of the federal government over the last 150 years. Residential schooling, which sought to remake each new generation of Aboriginal children, was both corrosive and emblematic of those

[illegible]

Child welfare

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sometimes without even the ability to read. According to Indian Affairs annual reports, into the early 1960s, only half of each year's enrolment got to Grade Six.[illegible]

Poor educational achievement has led to the chronic unemployment or underemployment, poverty, poor housing, substance abuse, family violence, and ill health that many former students of the schools have suffered as adults.

Governmental failure to meet the educational needs of Aboriginal children continues to the present day. Government funding is both inadequate and inequitably distributed. Educational achievement rates continue to be poor. Although secondary school graduation rates for all Aboriginal people have improved since the closure of the schools, considerable differences remain in comparison with the non-Aboriginal population. For example, according to the 2011 census, 29% of working-age Aboriginal people had not graduated from high school, compared with only 12% of their non-Aboriginal counterparts.[illegible]

Lower educational attainment for the children of Survivors has severely limited their employment and earning potential, just as it did for their parents. Aboriginal people have lower median after-tax income, are more likely to experience unemployment, and are more likely to collect employment insurance and social assistance benefits.[illegible] These statistics are true for all Aboriginal groups. For example, the unemployment rate for those living on reserves was 25% in 2006.[illegible] In 2009, the Métis unemployment rate for persons aged twenty-five to fifty-four was 8.4%, while the non-Aboriginal rate was 7.0%.[illegible] In 2006, the Inuit unemployment rate was 19%.[illegible]

Aboriginal people also have income well below their non-Aboriginal counterparts. The median income for Aboriginal people in 2006 was 30% lower than the median income for non-Aboriginal workers.[illegible] The gap narrows when Aboriginal people obtain a university degree—which they do at a far lower rate.[illegible] The rate of poverty for Aboriginal children is also very high—40%, compared with 17% for all children in Canada.[illegible] The income gap is pervasive: non-Aboriginal Canadians earn more than Aboriginal workers no matter whether they work on reserves or off reserves, or in urban, rural, or remote locations.[illegible] The poverty and attendant social problems that plague many Aboriginal communities can be traced back to the inadequacies of the residential schools. Overcoming this legacy will require an Aboriginal education system that meets the needs of Aboriginal students and respects Aboriginal parents, families, and cultures.

Language and culture

In a study of the impact of residential schools, the Assembly of First Nations noted in 1994 that

> language is necessary to define and maintain a world view. For this reason, some First Nation elders to this day will say that knowing or learning the native language is basic to any deep understanding of a First Nation way of life, to being a First Nation

> person. For them, a First Nation world is quite simply not possible without its own language. For them, the impact of residential school silencing their language is equivalent to a residential school silencing their world.[31]

Residential schools were a systematic, government-sponsored attempt to destroy Aboriginal cultures and languages and to assimilate Aboriginal peoples so that they no longer existed as distinct peoples. English—and, to a lesser degree, French—were the only languages of instruction allowed in most residential schools.

Students were punished—often severely—for speaking their own languages. Michael Sillett, a former student at the North West River residential school in Newfoundland and Labrador, told the Commission, "Children at the dorm were not allowed to speak their mother tongue. I remember several times when other children were slapped or had their mouths washed out for speaking their mother tongue; whether it was Inuktitut or Innu-aimun. Residents were admonished for just being Native."[32] As late as the 1970s, students at schools in northwestern Ontario were not allowed to speak their language if they were in the presence of a staff member who could not understand that language.[33] Conrad Burns, whose father attended the Prince Albert school, named this policy for what it was: "It was a cultural genocide. People were beaten for their language, people were beaten because ... they followed their own ways."[34]

By belittling Aboriginal culture, the schools drove a wedge between children and their parents. Mary Courchene recalled that in the 1940s at the Fort Alexander school in Manitoba, she was taught that "my people were no good. This is what we were told every day: 'You savage. Your ancestors are no good. What did they do when they, your, your, your people, your ancestors you know what they used to do? They used to go and they, they would worship trees and they would, they would worship the animals.'"

She became so ashamed of being Aboriginal that when she went home one summer and looked at her parents, she concluded that she hated them.

> I just absolutely hated my own parents. Not because I thought they abandoned me; I hated their brown faces. I hated them because they were Indians; they were Indian. And here I was, you know coming from. So I, I looked at my dad and I challenged him and he, and I said, "From now on we speak only English in this house."

Her father's eyes filled with tears. Then he looked at her mother and said, in Ojibway, "I guess we'll never speak to this little girl again. Don't know her."[35] In other cases, on the basis of their residential school experiences, parents decided to speak only English in front of their children.[36]

The damage affected future generations, as former students found themselves unable or unwilling to teach their own children Aboriginal languages and cultural ways. As a result, many of the almost ninety surviving Aboriginal languages in Canada are under serious threat of disappearing. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) states that 70% of Canada's Aboriginal languages are endangered.[37]

In the 2011 census, 14.5% of the Aboriginal population reported that their first language learned was an Aboriginal language.[28] In the previous 2006 census, 18% of those who identified as Aboriginal had reported an Aboriginal language as their first language learned, and a decade earlier, in the 1996 census, the figure was 26%. There are, however, variations among Aboriginal peoples. Nearly two-thirds of Inuit speak their Indigenous language, compared to 22.4% of First Nations people and only 2.5% of Métis people.[29] If the preservation of Aboriginal languages does not become a priority for both governments and Aboriginal communities, then what the residential schools failed to accomplish will come about through a process of systematic neglect.

Health

Residential schools endangered the health and well-being of the children who attended them. Many students succumbed to infectious disease, particularly tuberculosis, at rates far in excess of non-Aboriginal children.[30] Children who had been poorly fed and raised in the unsanitary conditions that characterized most residential schools were susceptible to a myriad of health problems as adults. Many would later succumb to tuberculosis that they contracted in the schools.[31]

Sexual and physical abuse, as well as separation from families and communities, caused lasting trauma for many other students. Katherine Copenace, who attended the Roman Catholic school in Kenora, told the Commission about her struggles: "When I got older, I had thoughts of suicide, inflicting pain on myself which I did. I used to slash my arms, pierce my arms, my body and I destroyed myself with alcohol which the government introduced of course."[32]

In many cases, former students could find no alternatives to self-destruction.[33] The effects of this trauma were often passed on to the children of residential school Survivors and sometimes to their grandchildren.

When reporting on First Nations health in 1905, Indian Affairs Chief Medical Officer Dr. Peter Bryce wrote that "the death-rate is wholly abnormal, amounting to, on an average, 34–70 per 1,000."[34] One hundred and ten years later, there continue to be troubling gaps in health outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians. For example:

- The infant mortality rates for First Nations and Inuit children range from 1.7 to over 4 times the non-Aboriginal rate.[35]
- From 2004 to 2008, the "age-specific mortality rate" at ages one to nineteen in the Inuit homelands was 188.0 deaths per 100,000 person-years at risk, compared with only 35.3 deaths per 100,000 in the rest of Canada.[36]
- First Nations people aged forty-five and over have nearly twice the rate of diabetes as compared with the non-Aboriginal population.[37]

- First Nations people were six times more likely than the general population to suffer alcohol-related deaths, and more than three times more likely to suffer drug-induced deaths.[38]

The overall suicide rate among First Nation communities is about twice that of the total Canadian population. For Inuit, the rate is still higher: six to eleven times the rate for the general population. Aboriginal youth between the ages of ten and twenty-nine who are living on reserves are five to six times more likely to die by suicide than non-Aboriginal youth.[39]

Health disparities of such magnitude have social roots. They are stark evidence of federal policies that separated Aboriginal people from their traditional lands and livelihoods, confining them to cramped and inadequate housing on reserves that lacked the basic sanitary services. It was from these communities that residential schools recruited students, and it was to them that the students returned with their health further weakened.

Justice

Residential schools inflicted profound injustices on Aboriginal people. Aboriginal parents were forced, often under pressure from the police, to give up their children to the schools. Children were taken far from their communities to live in frightening custodial institutions, which felt like prisons. The children who attended residential schools were often treated as if they were offenders, and yet they were the ones at risk of being physically and sexually abused.

The Canadian legal system failed to provide justice to Survivors who were abused. When, in the late 1980s, that system eventually did begin to respond to the abuse, it did so inadequately and in a way that often revictimized the Survivors. The Commission has been able to identify fewer than fifty convictions stemming from abuse at residential schools. This is a small fraction of the more than 38,000 claims of sexual and serious physical abuse that were submitted to the independent adjudication process that was established to assess and compensate residential school abuse claims.[40]

In many ways, the residential school experience lies at the root of the over-incarceration of Aboriginal people, which continues to this day. For Daniel Andre, the road from Grollier Hall in Inuvik in the Northwest Territories led, inevitably, to jail.

> I knew that I needed help to get rid of what happened to me in residential school. Like, everywhere I went, everything I did, all the jobs I had, all the towns I lived in, all the people I met, always brought me back to, to being in residential school, and being humiliated, and beaten, and ridiculed, and told I was a piece of garbage, I was not good enough, I was, like, a dog.... So, one of the scariest things for me being in jail is being humiliated in front of everybody, being made, laughed at, and which they do often 'cause they're just, like, that's just the way they are. And a lot of them are, like,

> survival of the fittest. And, like, if you show weakness, they'll, they'll just pick on you even more and ... I had to, to survive. I had to be strong enough to survive. I had to, I had to build up a system where I became a jerk. I became a bad person. I became an asshole. But I survived, and learnt all those things to survive.[41]

Andre's story was far too common. Traumatized by their school experiences, many former students succumbed to addictions, and found themselves among the disproportionate number of Aboriginal people who have come into conflict with the law.

Once Aboriginal persons are arrested, prosecuted, and convicted, they are more likely to be sentenced to prison than non-Aboriginal people. This overrepresentation is growing. In 1995–96, Aboriginal people made up 16% of all those sentenced to custody. By 2011–12, that number had grown to 28% of all admissions to sentenced custody, even though Aboriginal people make up only 4% of the Canadian adult population.[42] The over-incarceration of women is even more disproportionate: in 2011–12, 43% of admissions of women to sentenced custody were Aboriginal.[43] Aboriginal girls make up 49% of the youth admitted to custody, and Aboriginal boys are 36% of those admitted to custody.[44]

There is another link between the substance abuse that has plagued many residential school Survivors and the over-incarceration of Aboriginal people. Studies from Canada and the United States suggest that 15% to 20% of prisoners have fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD).[45] This is a permanent brain injury caused when a woman's consumption of alcohol during pregnancy affects her fetus. The disabilities associated with FASD include memory impairments, problems with judgment and abstract reasoning, and poor adaptive functioning.[46] A recent Canadian study found that offenders with FASD had much higher rates of criminal involvement than those without FASD, including more juvenile and adult convictions.[47] Diagnosing FASD can be a long and costly process, and the lack of a confirmed diagnosis can result in the unjust imprisonment of Aboriginal people who are living with a disability. In this way, the traumas of residential school are quite literally passed down from one generation to another.[48]

As well as being more likely to be involved as offenders with the justice system, Aboriginal people are 58% more likely than non-Aboriginal people to be the victims of crime.[49] Aboriginal women report being victimized by violent crime at a rate almost three times higher than non-Aboriginal women—13% of Aboriginal women reported being victimized by violent crime in 2009.[50] The most disturbing aspect of this victimization is the extraordinary number of Aboriginal women and girls who have been murdered or are reported as missing. A 2014 Royal Canadian Mounted Police report found that between 1980 and 2012, 1,017 Aboriginal women and girls were killed and 164 were missing. Of these, 225 cases remain unsolved.[51]

Canada has acknowledged some aspects of the ongoing legacy and harms of residential schools. The Supreme Court has recognized that the legacy of residential schools should be considered when sentencing Aboriginal offenders. Although these have been important measures, they have not been sufficient to address the grossly disproportionate imprisonment of Aboriginal people, which continues to grow, in part because of a lack of adequate funding and support for culturally appropriate alternatives to imprisonment. There has been an increase in Aboriginal child-welfare agencies, but the disproportionate apprehension of Aboriginal children also continues to grow, in part because of a lack of adequate funding for culturally appropriate supports that would allow children to remain safely within their own families.

Many of the individual and collective harms have not yet been redressed, even after the negotiated out-of-court settlement of the residential school litigation in 2006, and Canada's apology in 2008. In fact, some of the damages done by residential schools to Aboriginal families, languages, education, and health may be perpetuated and even worsened as a result of current government policies. New policies may be based on a lack of understanding of Aboriginal people, similar to that which motivated the schools initially. For example, child-welfare and health policies may fail to take into account the importance of community in raising children. We must learn from the failure of the schools, to ensure that the mistakes of the past are not repeated in the future.

Understanding and redressing the legacy of residential schools will benefit all Canadians. Governments in Canada spend billions of dollars each year in responding to the symptoms of the intergenerational trauma of residential schools. Much of this money is spent on crisis interventions related to child welfare, family violence, ill health, and crime. Despite genuine reform efforts, the dramatic overrepresentation of Aboriginal children in foster care, and among the sick, the injured, and the imprisoned, continues to grow. The Commission is convinced that genuine reconciliation will not be possible until the broad legacy of the schools is both understood and addressed.

Reconciliation

To some people, "reconciliation" is the re-establishment of a conciliatory state. However, this is a state that many Aboriginal people assert never has existed between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. To others, "reconciliation," in the context of Indian residential schools, is similar to dealing with a situation of family violence. It is about coming to terms with events of the past in a manner that overcomes conflict and establishes a respectful and healthy relationship among people, going forward. It is in the latter context that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada has approached the question of reconciliation.

To the Commission, "reconciliation" is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. In order for that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour.

We are not there yet. The relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples is not a mutually respectful one. But, we believe we can get there, and we believe we can maintain it. Our ambition is to show how we can do that.

In 1996, the *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* urged Canadians to begin a national process of reconciliation that would have set the country on a bold new path, fundamentally changing the very foundations of Canada's relationship with Aboriginal peoples. Much of what the Royal Commission had to say has been ignored by government; a majority of its recommendations were never implemented. But the report and its findings opened people's eyes and changed the conversation about the reality for Aboriginal people in this country.

In 2015, as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada wraps up its work, the country has a rare second chance to seize a lost opportunity for reconciliation. We live in a twenty-first-century global world. At stake is Canada's place as a prosperous, just, and inclusive democracy within that global world. At the TRC's first National Event in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in 2010, residential school Survivor Alma Mann Scott said,

> The healing is happening—the reconciliation.... I feel that there's some hope for us not just as Canadians, but for the world, because I know I'm not the only one. I know

> that Anishinaabe people across Canada, First Nations, are not the only ones. My brothers and sisters in New Zealand, Australia, Ireland—there's different areas of the world where this type of stuff happened.... I don't see it happening in a year, but we can start making changes to laws and to education systems ... so that we can move forward.[3]

Reconciliation must support Aboriginal peoples as they heal from the destructive legacies of colonization that have wreaked such havoc in their lives. But it must do even more. Reconciliation must inspire Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples to transform Canadian society so that our children and grandchildren can live together in dignity, peace, and prosperity on these lands we now share.

The urgent need for reconciliation runs deep in Canada. Expanding public dialogue and action on reconciliation beyond residential schools will be critical in the coming years. Although some progress has been made, significant barriers to reconciliation remain. The relationship between the federal government and Aboriginal peoples is deteriorating. Instead of moving towards reconciliation, there have been divisive conflicts over Aboriginal education, child welfare, and justice. The daily news has been filled with reports of controversial issues ranging from the call for a national inquiry on violence towards Aboriginal women and girls to the impact of the economic development of lands and resources on Treaties and Aboriginal title and rights.[4] The courts continue to hear Aboriginal rights cases, and new litigation has been filed by Survivors of day schools not covered under the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, as well as by victims of the "Sixties Scoop."[5] The promise of reconciliation, which seemed so imminent back in 2008 when the prime minister, on behalf of all Canadians, apologized to Survivors, has faded.

Too many Canadians know little or nothing about the deep historical roots of these conflicts. This lack of historical knowledge has serious consequences for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, and for Canada as a whole. In government circles, it makes for poor public policy decisions. In the public realm, it reinforces racist attitudes and fuels civic distrust between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians.[6] Too many Canadians still do not know the history of Aboriginal peoples' contributions to Canada, or understand that by virtue of the historical and modern Treaties negotiated by our government, we are all Treaty people. History plays an important role in reconciliation; to build for the future, Canadians must look to, and learn from, the past.

As Commissioners, we understood from the start that although reconciliation could not be achieved during the TRC's lifetime, the country could and must take ongoing positive and concrete steps forward. Although the Commission has been a catalyst for deepening our national awareness of the meaning and potential of reconciliation, it will take many heads, hands, and hearts, working together, at all levels of society to maintain momentum in the years ahead. It will also take sustained political will at all levels of government and concerted material resources.

The thousands of Survivors who publicly shared their residential school experiences at TRC events in every region of this country have launched a much-needed dialogue about what is necessary to heal themselves, their families, communities, and the nation. Canadians have much to benefit from listening to the voices, experiences, and wisdom of Survivors, Elders, and Traditional Knowledge Keepers—and much more to learn about reconciliation. Aboriginal peoples have an important contribution to make to reconciliation. Their knowledge systems, oral histories, laws, and connections to the land have vitally informed the reconciliation process to date, and are essential to its ongoing progress.

At a Traditional Knowledge Keepers Forum sponsored by the TRC, Anishinaabe Elder Mary Deleary spoke about the responsibility for reconciliation that both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people carry. She emphasized that the work of reconciliation must continue in ways that honour the ancestors, respect the land, and rebalance relationships. She said,

> I'm so filled with belief and hope because when I hear your voices at the table, I hear and know that the responsibilities that our ancestors carried ... are still being carried ... even through all of the struggles, even through all of what has been disrupted ... we can still hear the voice of the land. We can hear the care and love for the children. We can hear about our law. We can hear about our stories, our governance, our feasts, [and] our medicines.... We have work to do. That work we are [already] doing as [Aboriginal] peoples. Our relatives who have come from across the water [non-Aboriginal peoples], you still have work to do on your road.... The land is made up of the dust of our ancestors' bones. And so to reconcile with this land and everything that has happened, there is much work to be done ... in order to create balance.[7]

At the Victoria Regional Event in 2012, Survivor Archie Little said,

> [For] me reconciliation is righting a wrong. And how do we do that? All these people in this room, a lot of non-Aboriginals, a lot of Aboriginals that probably didn't go to residential school; we need to work together.... My mother had a high standing in our cultural ways. We lost that. It was taken away.... And I think it's time for you non-Aboriginals ... to go to your politicians and tell them that we have to take responsibility for what happened. We have to work together.[8]

The Reverend Stan McKay of the United Church, who is also a Survivor, believes that reconciliation can happen only when everyone accepts responsibility for healing in ways that foster respect. He said,

> [There must be] a change in perspective about the way in which Aboriginal peoples would be engaged with Canadian society in the quest for reconciliation.... [We cannot] perpetuate the paternalistic concept that only Aboriginal peoples are in need of healing.... The perpetrators are wounded and marked by history in ways that are different from the victims, but both groups require healing.... How can a conversation about reconciliation take place if all involved do not adopt an attitude of humility and

> respect? ... We all have stories to tell and in order to grow in tolerance and understanding we must listen to the stories of others.

Over the past five years, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada urged Canadians not to wait until its final report was issued before contributing to the reconciliation process. We have been encouraged to see that across the country, many people have been answering that call.

The youth of this country are taking up the challenge of reconciliation. Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth who attended our National Events made powerful statements about why reconciliation matters to them. At the Alberta National Event in Edmonton in March 2014, an Indigenous youth spoke on behalf of a national Indigenous and non-Indigenous collaboration known as the "Our Youth Movement." Jessica Bolduc said:

> We have re-examined our thoughts and beliefs around colonialism, and have made a commitment to unpack our own baggage, and to enter into a new relationship with each other, using this momentum, to move our country forward, in light of the 150th anniversary of the Confederation of Canada in 2017.
>
> At this point in time, we ask ourselves, "What does that anniversary mean for us as Indigenous youth and non-Indigenous youth, and how do we arrive at that day with something we can celebrate together?" ... Our hope is that, one day, we will live together, as recognized nations, within a country we can all be proud of.[illegible]

In 2013, at the British Columbia National Event in Vancouver, where over 5,000 elementary and secondary school students attended Education Day, several non-Aboriginal youth talked about what they had learned. Matthew Meneses said, "I'll never forget this day. This is the first day they ever told us about residential schools. If I were to see someone who's Aboriginal, I'd ask them if they can speak their language because I think speaking their language is a pretty cool thing." Antonio Jordao said, "It makes me sad for those kids. They took them away from their homes—it was torture, it's not fair. They took them away from their homes. I don't agree with that. It's really wrong. That's one of the worst things that Canada did." Cassidy Morris said, "It's good that we're finally learning about what happened." Jacqulyn Byers told us, "I hope that events like this are able to bring closure to the horrible things that happened, and that a whole lot of people now recognize that the crime happened and that we need to make amends for it."[illegible]

At the same National Event, TRC Honorary Witness Patsy George paid tribute to the strength of Aboriginal women and their contributions to the reconciliation process despite the oppression and violence they have experienced. She said:

> Women have always been a beacon of hope for me. Mothers and grandmothers in the lives of our children, and in the survival of our communities, must be recognized and supported. The justified rage we all feel and share today must be turned into instruments of transformation of our hearts and our souls, clearing the ground for respect, love, honesty, humility, wisdom, and truth. We owe it to all those who suffered, and

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the truth.[9] When TRC Chair Justice Murray Sinclair intervened to ask the audience to allow Brother Cavanaugh to finish his statement, he was able to do so without further interruption. Visibly shaken, Cavanaugh then went on to acknowledge that children had also been abused in the schools, and he condemned such actions, expressing his sorrow and regret for this breach of trust.

> I can honestly say that our men are hurting too because of the abuse scandal and the rift that this has created between First Nations and church representatives. Many of our men who are still working with First Nations have attended various truth and reconciliation sessions as well as Returning to Spirit sessions, hoping to bring about healing for all concerned. The Oblates desire healing for the abused and for all touched by the past breach of trust. It is our hope that together we can continue to build a better society.[10]

Later that same day, Ina Seitcher, who attended the Christie residential school, painted a very different picture of the school from what Brother Cavanaugh had described.

> I went to Christie residential school. This morning I heard a priest talking about his Christie residential school. I want to tell him [about] my Christie residential school. I went there for ten months. Ten months that impacted my life for fifty years. I am just now on my healing journey.… I need to do this, I need to speak out. I need to speak for my mom and dad who went to residential school, for my aunts, my uncles, all that are beyond now.… All the pain of our people, the hurt, the anger.… That priest that talked about how loving that Christie residential school was—it was not. That priest was most likely in his office not knowing what was going on down in the dorms or in the lunchroom.… There were things that happened at Christie residential school, and like I said, I'm just starting my healing journey. There are doors that I don't even want to open. I don't even want to open those doors because I don't know what it would do to me.[11]

These two, seemingly irreconcilable, truths are a stark reminder that there are no easy shortcuts to reconciliation. The fact that there were few direct exchanges at TRC events between Survivors and former school staff indicates that for many, the time for reconciliation had not yet arrived. Indeed, for some, it may never arrive. At the Manitoba National Event in 2010, Survivor Evelyn Brockwood talked about why it is important to ensure that there is adequate time for healing to occur in the truth and reconciliation process. She said,

> When this came out at the beginning, I believe it was 1990, about residential schools, people coming out with their stories, and … I thought the term, the words they were using, were truth, healing and reconciliation. But somehow it seems like we are going from truth telling to reconciliation, to reconcile with our white brothers and sisters. My brothers and sisters, we have a lot of work to do in the middle. We should really lift up the word *healing*.… Go slow, we are going too fast, too fast.… We have many tears to shed before we even get to the word *reconciliation*.[12]

To determine the truth and to tell the full and complete story of residential schools in this country, the TRC needed to hear from Survivors and their families, former staff, government and church officials, and all those affected by residential schools. Canada's national history in the future must be based on the truth about what happened in the residential schools. One hundred years from now, our children's children and their children must know and still remember this history, because they will inherit from us the responsibility of ensuring that it never happens again.

What is reconciliation?

During the course of the Commission's work, it has become clear that the concept of reconciliation means different things to different people, communities, institutions, and organizations. The TRC mandate describes "reconciliation" as

> an ongoing individual and collective process, and will require commitment from all those affected including First Nations, Inuit and Métis former Indian Residential School (IRS) students, their families, communities, religious entities, former school employees, government and the people of Canada. Reconciliation may occur between any of the above groups.[18]

The Commission defines "reconciliation" as an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships. A critical part of this process involves repairing damaged trust by making apologies, providing individual and collective reparations, and following through with concrete actions that demonstrate real societal change. Establishing respectful relationships also requires the revitalization of Indigenous law and legal traditions. It is important that all Canadians understand how traditional First Nations, Inuit, and Métis approaches to resolving conflict, repairing harm, and restoring relationships can inform the reconciliation process.

Traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders have long dealt with conflicts and harms using spiritual ceremonies and peacemaking practices, and by retelling oral history stories that reveal how their ancestors restored harmony to families and communities. These traditions and practices are the foundation of Indigenous law; they contain wisdom and practical guidance for moving towards reconciliation across this land.[19]

As First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities access and revitalize their spirituality, cultures, languages, laws, and governance systems, and as non-Aboriginal Canadians increasingly come to understand Indigenous history within Canada, and to recognize and respect Indigenous approaches to establishing and maintaining respectful relationships, Canadians can work together to forge a new covenant of reconciliation.

Despite the ravages of colonialism, every Indigenous nation across the country, each with its own distinctive culture and language, has kept its legal traditions and peacemaking practices alive in its communities. Although Elders and Knowledge Keepers across the land have told us that there is no specific word for "reconciliation" in their own languages, there are many words, stories, and songs, as well as sacred objects such as wampum belts, peace pipes, eagle down, cedar boughs, drums, and regalia, that are used to establish relationships, repair conflicts, restore harmony, and make peace. The ceremonies and protocols of Indigenous law are still remembered and practised in many Aboriginal communities.

At the TRC Traditional Knowledge Keepers Forum in June 2014, TRC Survivor Committee member and Elder Barney Williams told us that

> from sea to sea, we hear words that allude to … what is reconciliation? What does healing or forgiveness mean? And how there's parallels to all those words that the Creator gave to all the nations.… When I listen and reflect on the voices of the ancestors, your ancestors, I hear my ancestor alluding to the same thing with a different dialect.… My understanding [of reconciliation] comes from a place and time when there was no English spoken … from my grandmother who was born in the 1800s.… I really feel privileged to have been chosen by my grandmother to be the keeper of our knowledge.… What do we need to do? … We need to go back to ceremony and embrace ceremony as part of moving forward. We need to understand the laws of our people.[25]

At the same Forum, Elder Stephen Augustine explained the roles of silence and negotiation in Mi'kmaq law. He said "silence" is a concept, and can be used as a consequence for a wrong action or to teach a lesson. Silence is employed according to proper procedures, and ends at a particular time too. Elder Augustine suggested that there is both a place for talking about reconciliation and a need for quiet reflection. Reconciliation cannot occur without listening, contemplation, meditation, and deeper internal deliberation. Silence in the face of residential school harms is an appropriate response for many Indigenous peoples. We must enlarge the space for respectful silence in journeying towards reconciliation, particularly for Survivors who regard this as key to healing. There is also a place for discussion and negotiation for those who want to move beyond silence. Dialogue and mutual adjustment are significant components of Mi'kmaq law. Elder Augustine suggested that other dimensions of human experience—our relationships with the earth and all living beings—are also relevant in working towards reconciliation. This profound insight is an Indigenous law that could be applied more generally.[26]

Elder Reg Crowshoe told the Commission that Indigenous peoples' worldviews, oral history traditions, and practices have much to teach us about how to establish respectful relationships among peoples and with the land and all living things. Learning how to live together in a good way happens through sharing stories and practising reconciliation in our everyday lives.

> When we talk about the concept of reconciliation, I think about some of the stories that I've heard in our culture and stories are important.… These stories are so important as theories but at the same time stories are important to oral cultures. So when we talk about stories, we talk about defining our environment and how we look at

> authorities that come from the land and how that land, when we talk about our relationship with the land, how we look at forgiveness and reconciliation is so important when we look at it historically.
>
> We have stories in our culture about our superheroes, how we treat each other, stories about how animals and plants give us authorities and privileges to use plants as healing, but we also have stories about practices. How would we practise reconciliation? How would we practise getting together to talk about reconciliation in an oral perspective? And those practices are so important.[27]

As Elder Crowshoe explained further, reconciliation requires talking, but our conversations must be broader than Canada's conventional approaches. Reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians, from an Aboriginal perspective, also requires reconciliation with the natural world. If human beings resolve problems between themselves but continue to destroy the natural world, then reconciliation remains incomplete. This is a perspective that we as Commissioners have repeatedly heard: that reconciliation will never occur unless we are also reconciled with the earth. Mi'kmaq and other Indigenous laws stress that humans must journey through life in conversation and negotiation with all creation. Reciprocity and mutual respect help sustain our survival. It is this kind of healing and survival that is needed in moving forward from the residential school experience.

Over the course of its work, the Commission created space for exploring the meanings and concepts of reconciliation. In public Sharing Circles at National Events and Community Hearings, we bore witness to powerful moments of truth sharing and humbling acts of reconciliation. Many Survivors had never been able to tell their own families the whole truth of what happened to them in the schools. At hearings in Regina, Saskatchewan, Elder Kirby Littletent said, "I never told, I just told my children, my grandchildren I went to boarding school, that's all. I never shared my experiences."[28]

Many spoke to honour the memory of relatives who have passed on. Simone, an Inuk Survivor from Chesterfield Inlet, Nunavut, said,

> I'm here for my parents—'Did you miss me when I went away?' 'Did you cry for me?'—and I'm here for my brother, who was a victim, and my niece at the age of five who suffered a head injury and never came home, and her parents never had closure. To this day, they have not found the grave in Winnipeg. And I'm here for them first, and that's why I'm making a public statement.[29]

Others talked about the importance of reconciling with family members, and cautioned that this process is just beginning. Patrick Etherington, a Survivor from St. Anne's residential school in Fort Albany, Ontario, walked with his son and others from Cochrane, Ontario, to the National Event in Winnipeg. He said that the walk helped him to reconnect with his son, and that he "just wanted to be here because I feel this process that we are starting, we got a long ways to go."[30]

We saw the children and grandchildren of Survivors who, in searching for their own identity and place in the world, found compassion and gained new respect for their relatives who went to the schools, once they heard about and began to understand their experiences. At the Northern National Event in Inuvik, Northwest Territories, Maxine Lacorne said,

> As a youth, a young lady, I talk with people my age because I have a good understanding. I talk to people who are residential school Survivors because I like to hear their stories, you know, and it gives me more understanding of my parents.... It is an honour to be here, to sit here among you guys, Survivors. Wow. You guys are strong people, you guys survived everything. And we're still going to be here. They tried to take us away. They tried to take our language away. You guys are still here, we're still here. I'm still here.[31]

We heard about children whose small acts of everyday resistance in the face of rampant abuse, neglect, and bullying in the schools were quite simply heroic. At the TRC British Columbia National Event, Elder Barney Williams said that "many of us, through our pain and suffering, managed to hold our heads up ... we were brave children."[32] We saw old bonds of childhood friendship renewed as people gathered and found each other at TRC-sponsored events. Together, they remembered the horrors they had endured even as they recalled with pride long-forgotten accomplishments in various school sports teams, music, or art activities. We heard from resilient, courageous Survivors who, despite their traumatic childhood experiences, went on to become influential leaders in their communities and in all walks of Canadian life, including politics, government, law, education, medicine, the corporate world, and the arts.

We heard from officials representing the federal government that administered the schools. In a Sharing Circle at the Manitoba National Event, the Honourable Chuck Strahl (then minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada) said,

> Governments like to write ... policy, and they like to write legislation, and they like to codify things and so on. And Aboriginal people want to talk about restoration, reconciliation, forgiveness, about healing ... about truth. And those things are all things of the heart and of relationship, and not of government policy. Governments do a bad job of that.[33]

Church representatives spoke about their struggles to right the relationship with Aboriginal peoples. In Inuvik, Anglican Archbishop Fred Hiltz told us that

> as a church, we are renewing our commitment to work with the Assembly of First Nations in addressing long-standing, Indigenous justice issues. As a church, we are requiring anyone who serves the church at a national level to go through anti-racism training.... We have a lot to do in our church to make sure that racism is eliminated.[34]

Educators told us about their growing awareness of the inadequate role that post-secondary institutions played in training the teachers who taught in the schools. They have pledged to change educational practices and curriculum to be more inclusive of Aboriginal knowledge and history. Artists shared their ideas and feelings about truth and reconciliation through songs, paintings, dance, film, and other media. Corporations provided resources to bring Survivors to events, and, in some cases, some of their own staff and managers.

For non-Aboriginal Canadians who came to bear witness to Survivors' life stories, the experience was powerful. One woman said simply, "By listening to your story, my story can change. By listening to your story, I can change."[35]

Reconciliation as relationship

In its 2012 *Interim Report*, the TRC recommended that federal, provincial, and territorial governments, and all parties to the Settlement Agreement, undertake to meet and explore the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, as a framework for reconciliation in Canada. We remain convinced that the *United Nations Declaration* provides the necessary principles, norms, and standards for reconciliation to flourish in twenty-first-century Canada.

A reconciliation framework is one in which Canada's political and legal systems, educational and religious institutions, the corporate sector and civil society function in ways that are consistent with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which Canada has endorsed. The Commission believes that the following guiding principles of truth and reconciliation will assist Canadians moving forward:

1) The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* is the framework for reconciliation at all levels and across all sectors of Canadian society.

2) First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, as the original peoples of this country and as self-determining peoples, have Treaty, constitutional, and human rights that must be recognized and respected.

3) Reconciliation is a process of healing of relationships that requires public truth sharing, apology, and commemoration that acknowledge and redress past harms.

4) Reconciliation requires constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacies of colonialism that have had destructive impacts on Aboriginal peoples' education, cultures and languages, health, child welfare, the administration of justice, and economic opportunities and prosperity.

5) Reconciliation must create a more equitable and inclusive society by closing the gaps in social, health, and economic outcomes that exist between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

6) All Canadians, as Treaty peoples, share responsibility for establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships.

7) The perspectives and understandings of Aboriginal Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers of the ethics, concepts, and practices of reconciliation are vital to long-term reconciliation.

8) Supporting Aboriginal peoples' cultural revitalization and integrating Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, laws, protocols, and connections to the land into the reconciliation process are essential.

9) Reconciliation requires political will, joint leadership, trust building, accountability, and transparency, as well as a substantial investment of resources.

10) Reconciliation requires sustained public education and dialogue, including youth engagement, about the history and legacy of residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal rights, as well as the historical and contemporary contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canadian society.

Together, Canadians must do more than just *talk* about reconciliation; we must learn how to *practise* reconciliation in our everyday lives—within ourselves and our families, and in our communities, governments, places of worship, schools, and workplaces. To do so constructively, Canadians must remain committed to the ongoing work of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships.

For many Survivors and their families, this commitment is foremost about healing themselves, their communities, and nations, in ways that revitalize individuals as well as Indigenous cultures, languages, spirituality, laws, and governance systems. For governments, building a respectful relationship involves dismantling a centuries-old political and bureaucratic culture in which, all too often, policies and programs are still based on failed notions of assimilation. For churches, demonstrating long-term commitment requires atoning for actions within the residential schools, respecting Indigenous spirituality, and supporting Indigenous peoples' struggles for justice and equity. Schools must teach history in ways that foster mutual respect, empathy, and engagement. All Canadian children and youth deserve to know Canada's honest history, including what happened in the residential schools, and to appreciate the rich history and knowledge of Indigenous nations who continue to make such a strong contribution to Canada, including our very name and collective identity as a country. For Canadians from all walks of life, reconciliation offers a new way of living together.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

1. Truth and Reconciliation Commission Databases

The endnotes of this report often commence with the abbreviation TRC, followed by one of the following abbreviations: ASAGR, AVS, CAR, IRSSA, NRA, RBS, and LAC. The documents so cited are located in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's database. At the end of each of these endnotes, in square brackets, is the document identification number for each of these documents. The following is a brief description of each database.

Active and Semi-Active Government Records (ASAGR) Database: The Active and Semi-Active Government Records database contains active and semi-active records collected from federal governmental departments that potentially intersected with the administration and management of the residential school system. Documents that were relevant to the history and/or legacy of the system were disclosed to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) in keeping with the federal government's obligations in relation to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA). Some of the other federal government departments included, but were not limited to, the Department of Justice, Health Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and National Defence. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada undertook the responsibility of centrally collecting and producing the records from these other federal departments to the TRC.

Audio/Video Statement (AVS) Database: The Audio/Video Statement database contains video and audio statements provided to the TRC at community hearings and regional and national events held by the TRC, as well as at other special events attended by the TRC.

Church Archival Records (CAR) Database: The Church Archival Records database contains records collected from the different church/religious entities that were involved in administration and management of residential schools. The church/religious entities primarily included, but were not limited to, entities associated with the Roman Catholic Church, the Anglican Church of Canada, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and the United Church of Canada. The records were collected as part of the TRC's mandate, as set out in the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, to "identify sources and create as complete an historical record as possible of the IRS system and legacy."

Indian Residential Schools School Authority (IRSSA) Database: The Indian Residential Schools School Authority database is comprised of individual records related to each residential school, as set out by the IRSSA.

National Research and Analysis (NRA) Database: The National Research and Analysis database contains records collected by the National Research and Analysis Directorate, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, formerly Indian Residential Schools Resolution Canada (IRSRC). The records in the database were originally collected for the purpose of research into a variety of allegations, such as abuse in residential schools, and primarily resulted from court processes such as civil and criminal litigation, and later the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA), as well as from out-of-court processes such as Alternative Dispute Resolution. A majority of the records were collected from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada. The collection also contains records from other federal departments and religious entities. In the case of some records in the database that were provided by outside entities, the information in the database is incomplete. In those instances, the endnote in the report reads, "No document location, no document file source."

Red, Black and School Series (RBS) Database: The Red, Black and School Series database contains records provided by Library and Archives Canada to the TRC. These three sub-series contain records that were originally part of the "Headquarters Central Registry System," or records management system, for departments that preceded the current federal department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada. The archival records are currently related to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development fonds and are held as part of Library and Archives Canada's collection.

Library and Archives Canada Archival Records Container (LACAR) and Document Databases: The LACAR Records Container and Document databases contain records collected from Library and Archives Canada (LAC). The archival records of federal governmental departments that potentially intersected with the administration and management of Indian Residential Schools were held as part of Library and Archives Canada's collection. Documents that were relevant to the history and/or legacy of the Indian Residential School system were initially collected by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, in conjunction with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, as part of their mandate, as set out in the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement. The collection of records was later continued by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, based on the federal government's obligation to disclose documents in relation to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement.

2. Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864–1997

Within this report, *Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs* denotes the published annual reports created by the Government of Canada, and relating to Indian Affairs over the period from 1864 to 1997.

The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development was created in 1966. In 2011, it was renamed Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. Before 1966, different departments were responsible for the portfolios of Indian Affairs and Northern Affairs.

The departments responsible for Indian Affairs were (in chronological order):

- The Department of the Secretary of State of Canada (to 1869)
- The Department of the Secretary of State for the Provinces (1869–1873)
- The Department of the Interior (1873–1880)
- The Department of Indian Affairs (1880–1936)
- The Department of Mines and Resources (1936–1950)
- The Department of Citizenship and Immigration (1950–1965)
- The Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources (1966)
- The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (1966 to the present)

The exact titles of Indian Affairs annual reports changed over time, and were named for the department.

3. Library and Archives Canada

RG10 (Indian Affairs Records Group) The records of RG10 at Library and Archives Canada are currently part of the R216, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development fonds. For clarity and brevity, in footnotes throughout this report, records belonging to the RG10 Records Group have been identified simply with their RG10 information. Where a copy of an RG10 document held in a TRC database was used, the TRC database holding that copy is clearly identified, along with the RG10 information connected with the original document.

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C. Legal Cases

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D. Other Sources

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146. TRC, NRA, Anglican Church of Canada, General Synod Archives, ACC-MSCC-GS 75-103, series 3:2, box 55, file 6, S. Gould to D. C. Scott, Ottawa, 18 December 1931; [AAC-090271] TRC, NRA, Anglican Church of Canada, General Synod Archives, Triennial Report of the Board of Management to the Board of Missions, M.S.C.C. 07/1934, Accession GS 75-2A, Archibald [Fleming], Bishop of the Arctic, "The Arctic," in S. Gould, General Secretary, Board of Management, M.S.C.C., "Triennial Report of the Board of Management, M.S.C.C.," 4 July 1934, 353. [AGS-000185]
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150. See, for example: Davin, *Report on Industrial Schools*, 9.
151. For an example of Métis children at a church-run boarding school, see: Erickson, "'Bury Our Sorrows in the Sacred Heart,'" 34–35.
152. For an example of the Métis being viewed as 'dangerous,' see: Library and Archives Canada, RG10, volume 6031, "Extract from a letter dated the 19th July, 1899, from the Rev. Father Hugonard."
153. For an example, see: TRC, NRA, Library and Archives Canada, R776-0-5 (RG55), volume 562, T.B. #252440, Clifford Sifton to Mr. Smart, 18 October 1899. [NPC-523981c]
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155. For an example, see: Library and Archives Canada, RG10, volume 6323, file 658-10, part 3, W. M. Graham to the Secretary of the Department of Indian Affairs, 5 December 1929.
156. For example, it was estimated in 1936 that 80% of Métis children in Alberta received no education. Chartrand, "Métis Residential School Participation," 41.
157. Quiring, *CCF Colonialism in Northern Saskatchewan*; Barron, *Walking in Indian Moccasins*.
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162. Canada, *Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, 1945*, 168, 183; Canada, *Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, 1955*, 70, 76–78.
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164. *An Act respecting Indians*, Statutes of Canada 1951, chapter 29, section 113, reproduced in Venne, *Indian Acts*, 350.
165. Canada, *Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, 1961*, 57.
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170. For an example of this assessment, see: TRC, NRA, Canadian Welfare Council and Caldwell 1967, 89. [AEMR-019759]
171. For examples of the link between the closure of residential schools and the increase in children in care, see: TRC, NRA, Library and Archives Canada, RG10, box 98, Acc., 1999-01431-6, file 274/25-1-010, part 1, P. L. McGillvray to Indian Affairs Branch, 17 November 1964; [NCA-010544] TRC, NRA, INAC – Resolution Sector – IRS Historical Files Collection – Ottawa, file 211/6-1-010, volume 6, R. F. Davey to Michael Kearney, 12 June 1967; [SRS-000175] TRC, NRA, Library and Archives Canada, RG10, Acc. 1984-85/112, box 47, file 451/25-1, Newspaper article, "Mohawk Institute May Close after 139 Years," no date; [TAY-001133] TRC, NRA, Diocese of Huron Archives, Anglican Church of Canada, Huron University College, London, ON, Luxton Papers, box 27, Indian Reserves, Richard Isaac, Six Nations Council To Whom It May Concern, 13 March 1970; [TAY-001432] TRC, NRA, INAC – Resolution Sector – IRS Historical Files Collection – Ottawa, file 479/25-13-001, volume 3, G. D. Cromb to Deputy Minister, 20 March 1970; [TAY-003053-0001] TRC, NRA, National Capital Regional Service Centre – LAC – Ottawa, file 671/6-2-025, volume 4, Onion Lake Band Council Resolution, 31 July 1974. [ORC-008733-0002]
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304. Library and Archives Canada, RG10, volume 6016, file 486-2-5, part 1, H. Reed to J. Hugonnard, 13 June 1890.
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539. Cuthand, "Native Peoples," 382–383; Kulchyski, "Considerable Unrest," 100.
540. Goodwill and Sluman, *John Tootoosis*, 155.
541. Goodwill and Sluman, *John Tootoosis*, 156.
542. Both the 1905 fire at the Saint-Paul-des-Métis, Alberta, school and the 1930 fire at the Cross Lake, Manitoba, school were set by students. The Saint-Paul fire resulted in one death; the Cross Lake fire, in thirteen deaths. For the Saint-Paul fire, see: Stanley, "Alberta's Half-Breed Reserve," 96–98. For the Cross Lake fire, see: TRC, NRA, Library and Archives Canada, RG10, volume 6260, file 577-1, part 1, J. L. Fuller to A. McNamara, 8 March 1930; [CLD-000933-0000] William Gordon to Assistant Deputy and Secretary, Indian Affairs, 10 March 1930. [CLD-000934]
543. Wilson, *Missionary work*, 167–170.
544. TRC, NRA, Library and Archives Canada, RG10, volume 6032, file 150-40A, part 1, "Regulations Relating to the Education of Indian Children" (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1894). [AGA-001516-0000]
545. See, for examples: Canada, *Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, 1893*, 104; Canada, *Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, 1902*, 423.
546. See, for example: TRC, NRA, Library and Archives Canada, RG10, volume 6258, file 576-10, part 9, "Royal Canadian Mounted Police Report, Re: Thomas 'Tommy' Linklater et al.," 23 September 1936; [BRS-000240-0006] TRC, NRA, Library and Archives Canada, RG10, volume 6258, file 576-10, part 9, "Royal Canadian Mounted Police Report Re: Thomas 'Tommy' Linklater et al.," 20 October 1936; [BRS-000240-0005] TRC, NRA, Library and Archives Canada, RG10, volume 6209, file 468-10, part 2, "Royal Canadian Mounted Police Report, Re: Abner Elliott and Leonard Beeswax, truants," 13 October 1938. [MER-001043-0001] TRC, NRA, Library and Archives Canada, RG10, volume 6209, file 468-10, part 2, "Royal Canadian Mounted Police Report, Re: Abner Elliott and Leonard Beeswax, truants," 11 January 1939. [MER-001048-0001]
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27. According to UNESCO, 36% of Canada's Aboriginal languages are critically endangered, 29% are severely endangered, and 16% are definitely endangered. The remaining languages are all vulnerable. Moseley and Nicolas, *Atlas of the World's Languages*, 117.
28. Canada, Statistics Canada, *Aboriginal Peoples and Language*, http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/99-011-x/99-011-x2011003_1-eng.cfm.
29. Canada, Statistics Canada, *Aboriginal Peoples and Language*, http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/99-011-x/99-011-x2011003_1-eng.cfm; Canada, Statistics Canada, *Population Reporting an Aboriginal Identity*, http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/demo39a-eng.htm; Canada, Statistics Canada, *Aboriginal Languages in Canada*, http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2007001/9628-eng.htm.
30. Library and Archives Canada, RG 10, volume 3957, file 140754-1, E. H. Bryce to F. Pedley, 5 November 1909.
31. For long-term differences in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal tuberculosis death rates in Canada, see Wherrett, *Miracle of the Empty Beds*, 250–251.
32. TRC, AVS, Katherine Copenace, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 16 June 2010, Statement Number: 02-MB-16JU10-120.
33. Taylor, "[illegible]," 27 January 1998, http://www.[illegible].com/[illegible]/1998-01-[illegible].html.
34. Canada, *Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, 1907*, 275.
35. Smylie, "Review of Aboriginal Infant Mortality Rates," 147.
36. Canada, Statistics Canada, *Mortality Rates among Children and Teenagers*, http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2011003/article/11695-eng.htm.
37. Canada, Statistics Canada, *Select Health Indicators of First Nations People*, http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/130129/dq130129b-eng.htm.
38. First Nations Centre, *First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey*, 118.
39. Kirmayer et al., *Suicide Among Aboriginal People*, xv, 22.
40. Canada, Indian Residential Schools Adjudication Secretariat, "Adjudication Secretariat Statistics," http://iap-pei.ca/information/stats-eng.php (accessed 20 February 2015). By the end of 2014, it had awarded $2.69 billion in compensation for sexual and serious physical abuse under the Independent Assessment Process established by the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement.
41. TRC, AVS, Daniel Andre, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Whitehorse, Yukon, 23 May 2011, Statement Number: 2011-0205.
42. Canada, Statistics Canada, *Adult Correctional Services in Canada, 1997–1998*, http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/85-002-x1998008-eng.pdf; Canada, Statistics Canada, *Adult Correctional Services in Canada, 2011–2012*, http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2013001/article/11863-eng.htm#a5.
43. Canada, Statistics Canada, *Adult Correctional Services in Canada, 2011–2012*, http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2013001/article/11863-eng.htm#a5.
44. Canada, Statistics Canada, *Youth Correctional Services in Canada, 2011–2012*, http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2013001/article/11917-eng.htm#a5; Canada, Department of Justice, Youth Justice Research, *One Day Snapshot*, 5. These figures do not include Saskatchewan, which has a high rate of Aboriginal youth incarceration.
45. Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada, *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)*, http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/dca-dea/prog-ini/fasd-etcaf/index-eng.php; Ospina and Dennett, *Review on the Prevalence of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders*, iii.
46. Canada, Public Safety Canada, *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder*, 5, http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/ftl-lcl-spctrm/ftl-lcl-spctrm-eng.pdf.

47. Canada, Correctional Service of Canada, *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)*, iv., http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/lbrr/archives/cn21451-eng.pdf.
48. A study done for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation drew links among the intergenerational trauma of residential schools, alcohol addictions, and the prevalence of FASD in Aboriginal communities. Tait, *Fetal Alcohol Syndrome*.
49. Canada, Statistics Canada, *Violent Victimization of Aboriginal People*, http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2011001/article/11415-eng.pdf.
50. Canada, Statistics Canada, *Violent Victimization of Aboriginal Women*, http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2011001/article/11439-eng.pdf.
51. Royal Canadian Mounted Police, *Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women*, 3, http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/pubs/mmaw-faapd-eng.pdf.

Reconciliation

1. TRC, AVS, Alma Mann Scott, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 17 June 2010, Statement Number: 02-MB-16JU10-016.
2. Media coverage on the call for an inquiry on missing and murdered Aboriginal women has been extensive. See, for example: "Women's Memorial March in Vancouver Attracts Hundreds," *CBC News*, 14 February 2015, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/women-s-memorial-march-in-vancouver-attracts-hundreds-1.2957930; "Murdered and Missing Aboriginal Women Deserve Inquiry, Rights Group Says," *CBC News*, 12 January 2015, http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/murdered-and-missing-aboriginal-women-deserve-inquiry-rights-group-says-1.2897707; Ken S. Coates, "Aboriginal Women Deserve Much More than an Inquiry," *National Post*, 16 February 2015, http://news.nationalpost.com/2015/02/16/ken-s-coates-aboriginal-women-deserve-much-more-than-an-inquiry/. On economic development issues, see, for example: Jeff Lewis, "TransCanada CEO Says Canada Needs to Resolve Conflicts over Pipelines," *Globe and Mail*, 4 February 2015, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/economy/transcanada-ceo-says-canada-needs-to-resolve-conflicts-over-pipelines/article22786276/; Daniel Schwartz and Mark Gollom, "NB Fracking Protests and the Fight for Aboriginal Rights," *CBC News Canada*, 19 October 2013, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/n-b-fracking-protests-and-the-fight-for-aboriginal-rights-1.2126515; Michael MacDonald, "Shale Gas Conflict in New Brunswick Underscores Historical Grievances, Rights of First Nations," *Toronto Star*, 25 December 2013, http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2013/12/25/shale_gas_conflict_in_new_brunswick_underscores_historic_grievances_rights_of_first_nations.html.
3. On the role of the courts in Aboriginal rights and reconciliation, see: Joseph Brean, "'Reconciliation' with First Nations, Not the Charter of Rights & Freedoms, Will Define the Supreme Court in Coming years, Chief Justice Says," *National Post*, 13 March 2014, http://news.nationalpost.com/2014/03/13/reconciliation-with-first-nations-not-the-charter-of-rights-freedoms-will-define-the-supreme-court-in-coming-years-chief-justice-says/. On Aboriginal rights cases, see, for example: "6 Landmark Rulings on Native Rights," *CBC News*, 8 January 2013, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/6-landmark-rulings-on-native-rights-1.1316961. On day schools litigation, see, for example: "Residential School Day Scholars Launch Class-action Lawsuit," *CBC News*, 16 August 2012, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/residential-school-day-scholars-launch-class-action-lawsuit-1.1150017; Dene Moore, "Federal Appeal Court Gives OK on Hearing First Nations' Day-school Suit," *Canadian Press*, 4 March 2014, http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/federal-

appeal-court-gives-ok-on-hearing-first-nations-day-school-suit-1.1713809. On Sixties Scoop legislation, see, for example: "Sixties Scoop Case Moves Forward as Class-action Lawsuit," *CBC News*, 3 December 2014, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/sixties-scoop-case-moves-forward-as-class-action-lawsuit-1.2859332; Diana Mehta, "'Sixties Scoop' Class-action Lawsuit to Proceed," *Canadian Press*, 4 December 2014, http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/60s-scoop-class-action-lawsuit-to-proceed-1.2132317.

4. Miller, *Lethal Legacy*, vi.
5. TRC, AVS, Mary Deleary, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 26 June 2014, Statement Number: SE049.
6. TRC, AVS, Archie Little, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Victoria, British Columbia, 13 April 2012, Statement Number: SP135.
7. McKay, "Expanding the Dialogue," 107. McKay was the first Aboriginal moderator of the United Church of Canada (1992 to 1994).
8. TRC, AVS, Jessica Bolduc, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Edmonton, Alberta, 30 March 2014, Statement Number: ABNE401.
9. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Educating our Youth*, video, 19 September 2013, http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=3 (accessed 10 February 2014).
10. TRC, AVS, Patsy George, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Vancouver, British Columbia, 21 September 2013, Statement Number: BCNE404.
11. TRC, AVS, Dave Courchene, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 25 June 2014, Statement Number: SE048.
12. The mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada is listed under Schedule N of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, http://www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca/settlement.html (accessed 5 March 2015). In accordance with the TRC's mandate, the Commission was required to *recognize* "the significance of Aboriginal oral and legal traditions in its activities," Schedule N, 4(d); and "witness, support, promote and facilitate truth and reconciliation events at both the national and community levels," Schedule N, 1(c). The term *witness* "refers to the Aboriginal principle of 'witnessing,'" Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, Schedule N, 1(c), n1.

    Aboriginal oral history, legal traditions, and the principle of witnessing have deep historical roots and contemporary relevance for reconciliation. Indigenous law was used to resolve family and community conflict, to establish Treaties among various Indigenous nations, and to negotiate nation-to-nation treaties with the Crown. For a comprehensive history of Aboriginal–Crown Treaty making from contact to the present, see: Miller, *Compact, Contract, Covenant*. The term *witness* is in reference to the Aboriginal principle of witnessing, which varies among First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. Generally speaking, witnesses are called to be the keepers of history when an event of historic significance occurs. Through witnessing, the event or work that is undertaken is validated and provided legitimacy. The work could not take place without honoured and respected guests to witness it. Witnesses are asked to store and care for the history they witness and to share it with their own people when they return home. For Aboriginal peoples, the act of witnessing these events comes with a great responsibility to remember all the details and be able to recount them accurately as the foundation of oral histories. See: Thomas, "Honouring the Oral Traditions," 243–244.
13. TRC, AVS, Jim Dumont, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 26 June 2014, Statement Number: SE049.

14. TRC, AVS, Wilfred Whitehawk, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Key First Nation, Saskatchewan, 21 January 2012, Statement Number: SP039.
15. TRC, AVS, Vitaline Elsie Jenner, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 16 June 2010, Statement Number: 02-MB-16JU10-131.
16. TRC, AVS, Daniel Elliot, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Victoria, British Columbia, 13 April 2012, Statement Number: SP135.
17. TRC, AVS, Clement Chartier, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 22 June 2013, Statement Number: SNE202.
18. TRC, AVS, Steven Point, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Vancouver, British Columbia, 20 September 2013, Statement Number: BCNE304.
19. TRC, AVS, Merle Nisley, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Thunder Bay, Ontario, 14 December 2011, Statement Number: 2011-4199.
20. TRC, AVS, Tom Cavanaugh, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Victoria, British Columbia, 14 April 2012, Statement Number: SP137.
21. TRC, AVS, Ina Seitcher, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Victoria, British Columbia, 14 April 2012, Statement Number: SP136.
22. TRC, AVS, Evelyn Brockwood, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 18 June 2010, Statement Number: SC110.
23. Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, Schedule N, Principles, 1, http://www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca/settlement.html (accessed 5 March 2015).
24. Johnston, "Aboriginal Traditions," 141–159.
25. TRC, AVS, Barney Williams, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 26 June 2014, Statement Number: SE049.
26. TRC, AVS, Stephen Augustine, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 25 June 2014, Statement Number: SE048.
27. TRC, AVS, Reg Crowshoe, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 26 June 2014, Statement Number: SE049.
28. TRC, AVS, Kirby Littletent, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Regina, Saskatchewan, 16 January 2012, Statement Number: SP035.
29. TRC, AVS, Simone (last name not provided), Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Inuvik, Northwest Territories, 1 July 2011, Statement Number: SC092.
30. TRC, AVS, Patrick Etherington, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 17 June 2010, Statement Number: SC108.
31. TRC, AVS, Maxine Lacorne, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Inuvik, Northwest Territories, 29 June 2011, Statement Number: SC090.
32. TRC, AVS, Barney Williams, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Vancouver, British Columbia, 21 September 2013, Statement Number: BCNE404.
33. TRC, AVS, Honourable Chuck Strahl, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 16 June 2010, Statement Number: SC093.
34. TRC, AVS, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Inuvik, Northwest Territories, 1 July 2011, Statement Number: NNE402.
35. TRC, AVS, Anonymous, Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Regina, Saskatchewan, 17 January 2012, Statement Number: SP036.